DH on Saturday

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The Power of Good

Gauhati HC denies anticipatory bail to Khera

P9

Kadabagere-Tavarekere line added to Metro Phase 3A

Govt decides to include 6.6-km corridor for faster approvals

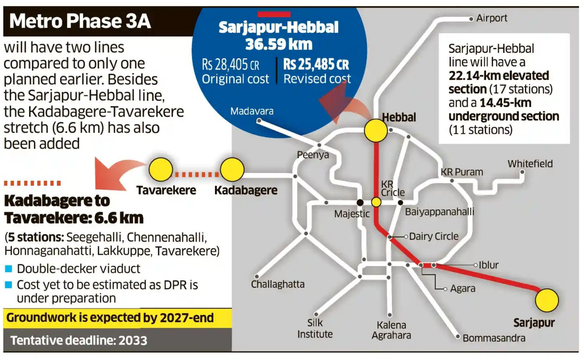
MUTHI-UR-RAHMAN SIDDIQUI
BENGALURU, DHNS

Namma Metro's Phase 3A, which earlier included only the Sarjapur-Hebbal line, will now add a 6.6-km fully elevated corridor between Kadabagere and Tavarekere along Magadi Road in the city's southwest, official sources said.

The decision, taken recently at the government level, could further delay approval from the Union government for the 36.59-km Sarjapur-Hebbal metro corridor, which will pass through the CBD and connect emerging tech hubs in the southeast.

"The state government has directed us to fast-track the Kadabagere-Tavarekere line, one of the future corridors. We will send the Detailed Project Report (DPR) for both Sarjapur-Hebbal and Kadabagere-Tavarekere lines together in the coming months," a source told *DH*.

With the DPR for the Tavarekere line expected in the next three months, authorities felt it should be clubbed with Phase 3A so both can be sent to the Centre for approval, the source added.



The Tavarekere line will extend the 12.25-km Hosahalli-Kadabagere corridor (part of Phase 3) and have five elevated stations. It will also feature a double-decker viaduct, with a flyover running below the metro line. Additional details, including alignment, traffic analysis and construction parameters, will be outlined in the DPR. No official colour name has been assigned to this line yet.

However, fast-tracking the Tavarekere line could invite criticism that the metro is expanding outward rather than focusing on core areas.

The state approved the Sarjapur-Hebbal corridor in December 2024, but the Centre flagged its high cost of Rs 776 crore per km.

Following a report from French consultancy Systra, the BMRCL reduced the project cost from Rs 28,405 crore to Rs 25,485 crore. It shortened underground stations from 210 metres to 170 metres and cut tunnelling costs from Rs 300 crore per km to Rs 210 crore, *DH* reported last October.

The Centre also raised concerns over plans for double-decker viaducts in the overground sections — Sarjapur to Iblur (14 km) and Agara to Koramangala 3rd Block (2.45 km). It argued that flyovers under metro lines could impact ridership.

▸ Metro, Page 5A

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Bengaluru set for showers from Tuesday

IMD predicts light to moderate rain or thundershowers

BENGALURU, DHNS

Relief from the intense summer heat may be on the way for Bengaluru, with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecasting thunderstorms accompanied by lightning from Tuesday onwards.

According to the IMD, light to moderate rainfall or thundershowers with gusty winds reaching 40–50 kmph are likely at isolated places across Bengaluru Urban and Rural districts during the afternoon or evening from Tuesday to Thursday. The maximum temperature is expected to be around 35°C, while the minimum may stay near 23°C.

A slight respite from the heat is expected even earlier, with the weather likely to remain partly cloudy.

In recent weeks, Bengaluru has been experiencing temperatures consistently above normal. Experts attribute this to shrinking green cover and increasing concretisation in the city.

On Friday at 5.30 pm, the Bengaluru City observatory recorded a maximum temperature of 35.6°C (1.4°C above normal) and a minimum of 24.6°C (2.3°C above normal).

The HAL airport observatory reported a maximum temperature of 35.9°C (1.8°C above normal) and a minimum of 22.6°C (1.1°C above normal).

Meanwhile, the agrometeorology unit at GKVK recorded a maximum of 34.6°C and a minimum of 23°C.

BWSSB chief visits water-scarce areas, assures no shortage this summer

BENGALURU, DHNS: BWSSB Chairman Ramprasat Manohar V has assured citizens that measures are in place to prevent water shortage this summer.

Ramprasat Manohar

Manohar visited Banagiri and Bhuvaneshwari Nagar areas, which had experienced acute water shortage last summer, and sought feedback from local residents about the current situation.

"In case there are any complaints of water shortage, we are prepared to address the concerns swiftly," he said.

Residents expressed satisfaction about the way the BWSSB had handled the situation. Mini water tanks and other measures had come to their rescue this summer, they said.

"There have been no disruptions or shortage of water supply. I have kept a close watch on the situation and have asked officials to respond swiftly to any complaints. With the help of the Sanchari Cauvery initiative and mini water tankers, we have been successful in keeping the situation under control," Manohar said.

Beat the heat: Doctors recommend diet tweaks, hydration, exercise

SHARON NATASHA
BENGALURU, DHNS

Doctors and dieticians in the city report a rising number of dehydration and gastroenteritis cases. They advise that the best way to beat the heat is through simple dietary changes, staying well hydrated, and exercising regularly.

Summer wellness

- **Drink water** regularly; add **lemon, ginger, tulsi** or **amla** for cooling benefits.
- Include **cucumber, watermelon, muskmelon, tomatoes**, and **ice apple**; have **curd, kefir**, or **buttermilk** to aid digestion and hydration.
- Avoid heavy foods; opt for **leafy greens** and simple meals.
- Work out early morning; opt for **low-heat** activities like **yoga** or **swimming.**

What to avoid

- **Heavy, spicy, fried**, and **salty food** as they raise body heat and increase dehydration risk.
- **Excess caffeine** and **alcohol** can dehydrate and spike sodium levels; avoid energy and aerated drinks.
- Don't overlook **fatigue, dizziness**, or **dryness** – hydrate immediately.
- Unprotected sun exposure (especially for children); ensure children carry **water** and wear **caps** during outdoor activities.

GBA outlines Rs 28-cr action plan centred on climate action

Includes projects proposed by 5 corpns in their budgets

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has finalised a Rs 28-crore climate action plan outlining a range of new initiatives aimed at improving green cover, enhancing groundwater recharge, and strengthening urban climate resilience across the city.

The plan is in addition to projects proposed by the five city corporations in their respective budgets.

According to officials, the action plan will be implemented through the Climate Action Cell, which functions under the GBA's Forest, Environment and Climate Change Department. The proposals combine infrastructure development, ecological restoration, and public awareness initiatives.

Urban greening forms a major share of the total outlay. The plan includes the development of eco-friendly "model parks" in areas such as Yelahanka, ISRO Layout, and AECS Layout, with features like biodiversity zones, composting units, children's play areas, and plantations of native species. Road-median greening has also been proposed in Gandhinagar and other constituencies.

A key component is the installation of a rainwater harvesting system at the GBA head office campus, designed to capture rooftop and surface runoff for reuse in landscaping and sanitation.

The action plan also proposes converting underutilised land parcels into "floodable landscapes" to improve stormwater management.

One such project has been proposed in Lingarajapuram in the Sarvagnanagar Assembly constituency.

Administrative and outreach activities also form part of the plan. Around Rs 70 lakh has been earmarked for Climate Action Cell fellows, along with funds for workshops, ward-level climate action planning, and awareness campaigns. Additional allocations include biodiversity documentation, urban forestry maintenance, and rooftop edible garden initiatives in schools.

The Rs 28-crore allocation has been distributed across 22 components.

Key allocations

Total outlay: **Rs 28 crore**

- **Rs 1 cr:** Rainwater harvesting system at GBA Head Office
- **Rs 1 cr:** Development of edible gardens
- **Rs 1.6 cr:** Greening of under-flyover spaces and junctions
- **Rs 2 cr:** Greening of road medians in Gandhinagar constituency
- **Rs 2 cr:** Development of mini-forest in Yelahanka New Town
- **Rs 2 cr:** Naksatra Vana, herbal garden, butterfly garden, and road-median greening in East Corporation
- **Rs 2.5 cr:** Eco-friendly park development in ISRO Layout (South Corporation)
- **Rs 2.5 cr:** Park development in AECS Layout
- **Rs 2.5 cr:** Park development in West Corporation
- **Rs 4.5 cr:** Administrative expenses
- **Rs 5 cr:** Landscape improvement in Lingarajapuram
- **Rs 40 lakh:** Malleswaram nursery school at Gayatri Devi Park

Body found; police launch probe

BENGALURU, DHNS: A mangled body of a man was found on the outskirts of Bengaluru on Friday, police said.

The body is yet to be identified.

Locals who discovered it during morning walks alerted the police.

Investigators arrived at the spot along with scene of crime (SOCO) and forensic officials.

The area near Nelamangala where the body was found was deserted.

Police are examining nearby CCTV cameras and scouring the footage.

The body has been moved to a hospital for the autopsy procedures. Further probe is underway, police said.

Free bus travel for II PUC examinees

BENGALURU, DHNS: Students appearing for the second-year PUC Exam-2 can travel for free on ordinary BMTC buses from their residence to the examination centres by producing their exam hall/admission tickets.

The Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) will operate additional trips based on demand and provide request stops near the exam centres.

Exam-2 is scheduled from April 30 to May 13.

Corpn gets sweeping machine under CSR

BENGALURU, DHNS

HDFC Bank on Friday handed over a self-propelled road sweeping machine to the Bengaluru East City Corporation under its corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative.

The machine is an advanced TPS-VACSWEEP-5000 SPF model, designed for efficient cleaning operations and powered by an Ashok Leyland engine, officials said.

Corporation Commissioner DS Ramesh said the machine will be used for cleaning roads and is capable of covering 4 to 10 km per hour depending on road and dust conditions.

He thanked HDFC Bank for contributing towards the city's cleanliness and urged other corporate organisations to actively utilise their CSR funds for public welfare and urban development projects.

Lokhande Snehal Sudhakar, Corporation Additional Commissioner (Development), and Naveen Kumar Maregowda, Cluster Head and Senior Vice-President of HDFC Bank, were present on the occasion.

Flood-prone areas inspected

BENGALURU, DHNS: Bengaluru South City Corporation (BSCC) Commissioner KN Ramesh visited flood-prone areas under his jurisdiction and directed officials to implement preventive measures to avoid flooding during the monsoon season.

At HSR Layout, he instructed officials to complete the construction of shoulder drains and ensure they are directly connected to the primary stormwater drain.

Noting the importance of opening the inlet to Bellandur Lake to prevent flooding, he also directed officials to write to the BDA to expedite desilting works and restore the lake inlet to allow smooth inflow of rainwater from the K-100 stormwater drain.

Ramesh further assured that the KAS Officers' Layout will not face flooding, as a new drainage system has been constructed beneath the Central Silk Board metro station.

Bengaluru Saturday, April 25, 2026 Pages 32 Vol 79 No 114 ₹8

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RCB ace a high-speed chase

Kohli, Padikkal smash half-centuries as Challengers down GT by 5 wickets

P19

Gig work in Kashmir

The Saturday Story

In India's metros, the gig economy is thriving. However, in conflict-ridden Kashmir, the situation is starkly different. While the region is currently experiencing a period of relative calm, security remains high. In this week's Saturday Story, a DH journalist spends a day with a delivery agent on the roads of Srinagar.

Full story, Page 17

Kuki-Naga clashes claim 3 lives in Manipur

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

Strife-torn Manipur reported three deaths on Friday after gunfights between members of two tribal groups. The deceased included two Kukis and a Naga, organisations representing the two tribes said in separate statements.

The separate gunfights took place in villages in Naga-dominated Ukhrul district, which has remained on the boil due to conflicts between the Nagas and the Kukis since February.

Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM), an apex body of the Kukis, said Tangkhul Naga armed persons launched an assault at around 5.30 am, resulting in the killing of "village volunteers" Paominlun Haolai, 19, and Letlal, 43.

▸ Manipur, Page 5A

Govt to give hiring support to new GCCs

To reinforce Karnataka's position as India's leading hub for GCCs, the government has entered into an MoU with Naukri.com to support early-stage GCCs by facilitating structured access to talent solutions.

P 15

Cabinet okays 15% SC internal reservation

Adopts 5.25-5.25-4.5 plan; Alemaris get 20% in Group C

BENGALURU, DHNS

Former minister H Anjaneya offers sweets to CM Siddaramaiah after the special Cabinet meet's decision on SC internal quota. HM G Parameshwara (left) and minister H K Patil look on. DH PHOTO

The Karnataka Cabinet on Friday approved the contentious internal reservation for Scheduled Castes, with a revised formula of 5.25% : 5.25% : 4.5%, with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah calling it a "historic decision" that ends a four-decade-long struggle.

The decision was taken unanimously based on the report by a technical committee headed by the Chief Secretary and will set in motion the recruitment process to fill up 56,432 posts immediately, said Siddaramaiah.

"The earlier 6:6:5 formula (for the three Groups A, B and C) was proportionately reduced to 15% to comply with the 50% reservation ceiling mandated by courts. The Cabinet unanimously decided on 5.25% for SC Left (Group A), 5.25% for SC Right–Holeya (Group B), and 4.5% for Bhovi, Lambani, Koracha, Korma and 59 Alemari castes (Group C)," Siddaramaiah said.

The CM claimed that the decision was delayed due to several factors even after a unanimous decision to pass the SC internal reservation was taken at a convention at Chitradurga, which was attended by AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge and members belonging to 101 SC communities and 59 Alemari castes.

"Following the August 1, 2024 ruling by a seven-judge SC bench permitting internal reservation by states, Karnataka set up a one-man panel under retired HC judge Justice H N Nagamohan Das, which recommended categorisation from A to E," the CM said.

▸ Cabinet, Page 7

Quota count

- CM says all 56,432 posts announced in the budget will be filled under the internal reservation framework immediately
- Says government is committed to giving 17% to SC and 7% to ST
- But based on the court order, SC reservation will be 15% and ST 3%
- Clarifies that if high court rules favourably, the additional 6% will be treated as backlog

> "Our party's stand is 'sarvarigu samapaalu' (equal share to all) and social justice. Though delayed, this is a historic decision.
>
> SIDDARAMAIAH, Chief Minister

College staff force KCET students to remove 'janivara', 3 detained

BENGALURU, DHNS: Despite clear instructions from the Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) not to force students to remove any religious identifications, the staff at Krupanidhi PU college in Bengaluru allegedly forced students to remove the sacred thread ('janivara') during the KCET (Karnataka Common Entrance Test) exams on Thursday.

Following complaints by three students and their parents, the college management suspended three staff members. Meanwhile, the police detained the three staff members and are conducting an investigation.

▸ Janivara, Page 5A

AAP now — Lok Sabha 3 | Rajya Sabha 3 | AAP MLAs: Punjab: 92 Delhi: 22 Gujarat: 5 Goa: 2 Jammu & Kashmir: 1

7 of AAP's 10 RS MPs jump to BJP

Defectors claim not liable for disqualification

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

BJP president Nitin Nabin (centre) offers sweets to Rajya Sabha MPs Raghav Chadha (second right), Sandeep Pathak (second left) and Ashok Mittal (third right), in New Delhi. PTI

Operation Lotus' struck the AAP on Friday with seven of its Rajya Sabha members defecting to the BJP, reducing the Arvind Kejriwal-led party to just three in the Upper House and throwing it into another crisis a year after its electoral debacle in Delhi.

The MPs who jumped the ship were Raghav Chadha, AAP's RS Dy Leader Ashok Mittal, Sandeep Pathak, Swati Maliwal, cricketer Harbhajan Singh, Rajinder Gupta and Vikramjit Singh Sahney. The defected MPs claimed that they are not liable for disqualification as they constitute more than two-thirds of the AAP Parliamentary party's strength in the Rajya Sabha.

Now, only Sanjay Singh, ND Gupta and Sant Balbir Singh remain in the AAP in the Upper House while it has three MPs in the Lok Sabha.

▸ AAP, Page 7
Related report, Page 13

No funds or staff to conduct GBA polls by June 30: SEC tells SC

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Karnataka State Election Commission (SEC) has informed the Supreme Court that the concerned authorities have requested an extension of the deadline for conducting the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) elections, till September 30.

They stated that there is a severe strain on available staff due to the ongoing Census and Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, and it would be difficult to conduct the polls by June 30.

Seeking appropriate orders from the court, the SEC said, it has published the final voters list on April 18, but it has no funds or staff of its own to complete the exercise, without support from the state government.

▸ GBA polls, Page 5A

Iran FM arrives in Pak amid talk deadlock

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi arrived in Islamabad late Friday night to discuss regional developments and the US-Iran ceasefire with Pakistan's top leadership, reviving hopes for the second round of talks with America to end the war in West Asia. US special envoys are travelling to Pakistan on Saturday.

P 14

Oppn's fresh notice for CEC's removal

The Opposition on Friday submitted a fresh notice in the Rajya Sabha seeking to move a motion for the removal of CEC Gyanesh Kumar. The fresh charges on Kumar's "proved misbehaviour" include "continued partisan asymmetry in the enforcement of Model Code of Conduct" during the ongoing polls.

P 9

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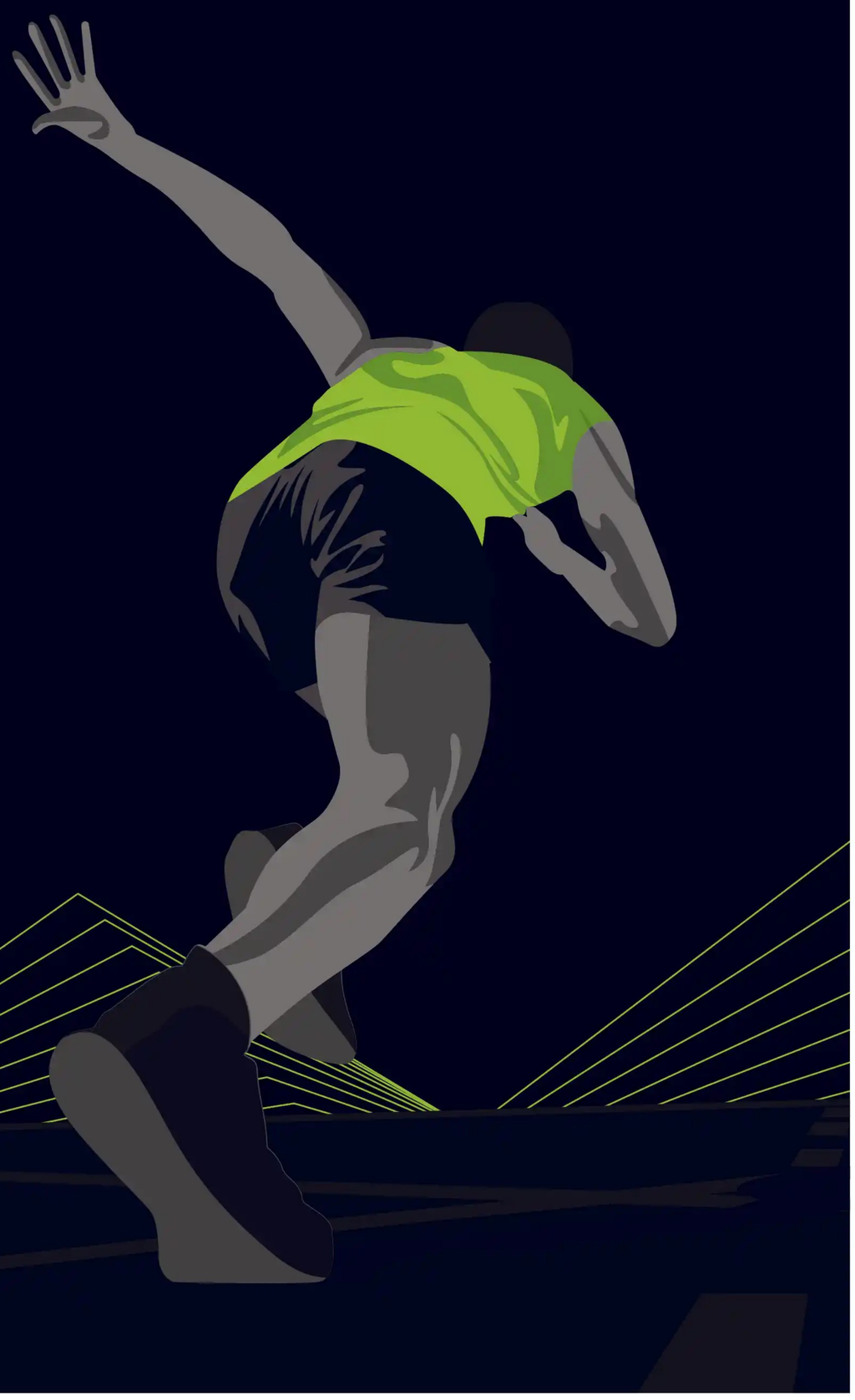

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Kona Vamsi Krishna is new B'luru South Division DCP

BENGALURU, DHNS: The government on Friday appointed IPS officer Kona Vamsi Krishna as the new Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), South Division, Bengaluru City.

"Dr Kona Vamsi Krishna, IPS (KN 2014), Superintendent of Police, Karnataka Lokayukta, is transferred with immediate effect and posted until further orders as Deputy Commissioner of Police, South Division, Bengaluru City. Lokesh Bharamappa Jagalasar, IPS, has been transferred," the order read.

Before his transfer, Krishna was Superintendent of Police at the Karnataka Lokayukta. He is from the 2014 batch. Prior to that, he served as Commandant, 1st Battalion, Karnataka State Reserve Police, and was placed in concurrent charge of Superintendent of Police, Wireless, Bengaluru.

Jagalasar, is yet to receive a new posting. During his two-year tenure as DCP South, he was known as a strict and fair officer. He has served as SP of Bagalkot and Dharwad, and as Director of the Karnataka Police Academy, Mysuru.

Planning paradox?: HAL 'unaware' of plans to redevelop old airport

State plans global aerospace hub; AAI pushes to resume commercial flights

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

In Bengaluru's latest planning paradox, everyone seems to have a blueprint for Hindustan Aeronautics Limited's (HAL) old airport area, with little involvement from HAL itself.

A recent proposal submitted by a member of the Karnataka State Policy and Planning Commission (KSPPC) highlighted an ambitious 10-year plan to transform the area into a global aerospace hub. The Airport Authority of India (AAI) has also shown interest to reopen the HAL airport for commercial flights by pushing its very own 10-year masterplan.

However, HAL has denied involvement in either proposed plan, arguing that it is yet to be officially informed, more specifically the proposal to turn 700-acre HAL airport into a global aerospace hub.

"HAL is now aware through various media reports of a proposal to redevelop the area around the HAL airport into a global aerospace hub. HAL has not formally received any such proposal from the government of Karnataka or held any discussions on the matter," an HAL spokesperson told *DH*.

Highlighting why the plan is not feasible, the spokesperson reiterated that HAL airport and the associated test flying area are critical facilities, strategically designed to cater to the test requirements of production, overhaul and development of aircraft.

"In addition to HAL, the airport is extensively used by other defence research organisations such as National Flight Test Centre (NFTC) under Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA), for prototype and development flights and future development projects. Further, National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL), Centre for Airborne Systems (CABS) and Aircraft and Systems Testing Establishment (ASTE) are utilising these facilities for test flying of various R&D platforms of national importance. The HAL airport is a designated major airbase supporting air operations for IAF, Indian Navy and Indian Army. The airport itself serves as a 24-hour stand-by for air operations for national emergencies. It also caters to VVIP and dignitary movements," HAL stated.

At the HAL airport, the terminal building belongs to the AAI, while the land beyond that belongs to the defence authorities. "Any redevelopment plans at HAL will naturally involve AAI. So far, we haven't been intimated by any such proposal by the KSPPC. There have been no discussions on such a crucial matter," said K Anbarasu, General Manager (Bengaluru), AAI.

In its master plan, the AAI has proposed to demolish the existing terminal in 2030 and start building a new one. As per the plan, the terminal will be expanded in phases and the revamped airport will have a seven-floor car parking facility and a commercial complex in addition to lane expansion of the road in front of the terminal.

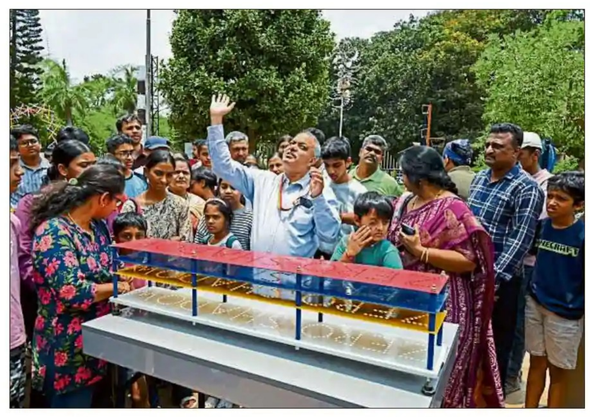
S Mohanadass Hegde, the KSPPC member who made the proposal before Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh, said HAL and AAI would only be involved once the project gets the greenlight from the Centre and the NITI Aayog.

"These are the agencies that will make the decision. Once we get their approval, we'll hold discussions with HAL on taking the plan forward," he added.

The KSPPC masterplan outlines a 10-year roadmap to establish the HAL Aerospace City District as India's first integrated defence-civil-space corridor. Key initiatives include creating advanced manufacturing clusters for airframes, engines, avionics, composites and rotorcraft; developing HAL air mobility campuses; and launching a global training and skilling academy.

While *DH* earlier reported the Karnataka State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (KSIIDC)'s involvement in the masterplan submitted, an official from the office of the Secretary, Infrastructure Development, Ports and Inland Water Transport Department, clarified that the KSIIDC was not a part of the plan.

"After a KSPPC member shared the proposal, it was sent to the KSIIDC for clarification on the matter. The KSIID isn't involved in the plan," the official said.



Science enthusiasts gathered at the Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium in Bengaluru on Friday, witnessing the fascinating moment when shadows slowly disappeared under precise cosmic alignment. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

For one magic minute, city appears shadowless

BENGALURU, DHNS: Science enthusiasts gathered at the Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium (JNP) on Friday to watch shadows disappear.

At exactly 12.18 pm, for one minute, the sun stood directly overhead, making shadows from vertical objects vanish completely.

The main attraction was a gnomon, a simple vertical stick. Under normal conditions, the stick casts a long shadow that moves with the sun. During this event, the sun was positioned so precisely overhead that light travelled straight down, leaving no shadow on the ground.

Planetarium Director BR Guruprasad said science should be fun for everyone.

"For young visitors especially, the planetarium offered something a textbook cannot replicate and moments like this are irreplaceable. This was a direct, sensory encounter with a concept that might otherwise remain abstract. A child who watches a shadow disappear will ask why, and that curiosity is what is important," he said.

"Because Bengaluru is close to the equator, we see this twice a year. Different cities see it at different times based on where they are located on the map," he added.

Six Bengaluru tourists injured in Srinagar hotel lift mishap

Technical fault cited as reason; all stable, under treatment

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

Six tourists from Bengaluru were injured after a lift reportedly malfunctioned at a hotel in the Hyderpora area of Srinagar on Friday, officials said, triggering fresh concerns over safety standards in the Kashmir Valley's fast-expanding hospitality sector.

The incident occurred while the tourists were using the lift at the hotel where they were staying.

Officials said the lift is believed to have developed a technical fault, though the exact sequence of events leading to the incident remains unclear.

All six injured were shifted to nearby Bone and Joint Hospital Barzulla, where doctors said they had sustained injuries to their legs and lower body.

Medical authorities confirmed that all patients are in stable condition and are undergoing treatment.

The injured have been identified as Venkatesh (65), son of Muni Thimmaiah; D Manjula (54), wife of R L Murthy; Kushala (18), daughter of Jayaram; Pankaja (16); Venkatalakshmamma (60), wife of Chinnayya; and Sowbhagya (60), wife of Venkatesh. All are residents of Bengaluru and were visiting Kashmir as part of a tour.

The officials said no formal statement has been issued by the hotel management so far. Authorities are expected to conduct a detailed inquiry to determine the cause of the malfunction and whether mandatory safety and maintenance protocols were followed.

The incident comes at a time when Kashmir is witnessing a steady increase in tourist arrivals, with hotels across Srinagar and other destinations operating nearly 60 per cent occupancy levels after last year's slump post Pahalgam terror attack.

While tourism stakeholders have welcomed the revival of the sector, the incident has brought into focus the need for stricter enforcement of safety regulations, particularly in older or rapidly upgraded hospitality establishments.

Experts say routine inspection of critical infrastructure such as lifts, fire safety systems and electrical fittings is essential to prevent such incidents, especially during peak tourist season.

Special trains to Bengal & Chhattisgarh

BENGALURU, DHNS: The railways will operate special trains connecting Bengaluru with Bengal and Chhattisgarh to clear the extra passenger rush during the summer.

Train number 06247 will leave Bengaluru Cantonment at 12.15 am on April 27 and reach Malda Town (West Bengal) at 7.30 pm on Tuesday.

Train number 08261 will depart from Korba (Chhattisgarh) at 9 am on May 2 and arrive at Yelahanka at 7 pm on Sunday. Train number 08262 will depart from Yelahanka at 9 pm on May 3 and reach Korba at 8 am on Tuesday.

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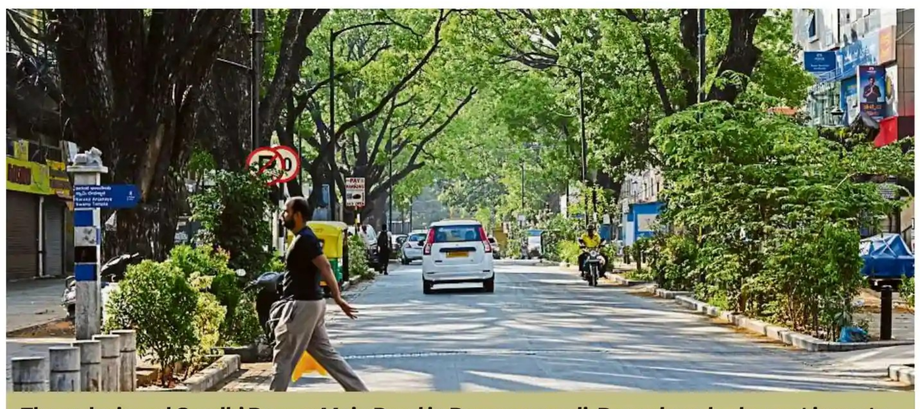
GAPS IN STREET REDESIGN PROJECT

Inside the Gandhi Bazaar model

The pilot project that envisioned pedestrianisation, a hawking zone, and organised parking fell into disarray due to poor implementation and a lack of local enthusiasm. What does this mean to Bengaluru?



The redesigned Gandhi Bazaar Main Road in Basavanagudi, Bengaluru, looks neat in parts.
DH PHOTOS/PUSHKAR V

Street vendors are an integral part of the market. The Gandhi Bazaar project was meant to form such vending zones on Gandhi Bazaar Main Road in Basavanagudi.

However, not all vendors have a proper designated space. A reality check on the current conditions shows many flaws, including a broken parking system.

A pushcart parked on the footpath for a long time on Gandhi Bazaar Main Road in Basavanagudi, Bengaluru.

PUSHKAR V
BENGALURU, DHNS

Gandhi Bazaar Main Road in Basavanagudi is one of Bengaluru's oldest market stretches, with the city's temple-town feel, eateries, and busy shopping lanes. It is a landmark where shopping, food and community life all meet, especially around places like Vidyarthi Bhavan, Bull Temple, and Bugle Rock.

Under the Gandhi Bazaar Market Street Redesign Project, led by the Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT) and implemented by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (now GBA), the plan was to make the stretch more pedestrian-friendly, improve traffic flow, and create organised vending spaces. The project cost is reported between Rs 24.88 crore and Rs 28 crore, with work starting at the end of 2022 and largely completed by early 2024.

The plan faced protests from traders and residents who feared loss of access and business. After pushback, the design incorporated clearer vending zones, loading bays and parking provisions. The final layout incorporated wider footpaths, designated hawking areas, cobblestone work and structured parking.

On paper, the design looks fine; it accommodates traffic flow, creates space for pedestrians, allows designated parking and gives vendors a defined place. But on the ground, the issues persist: haphazard parking, footpath encroachment, and unauthorised vendors without designated spaces, which reduce usable space and create congestion.

A traffic personnel from Basavanagudi said, "Many are old timers, and it is difficult to ask them to park vehicles in the parking lots. We levy fines, but it's a constant issue. Many problems, such as traffic jams and the ease of passage for walkers, will be resolved if people park properly. Since the metro is not very close, people depend on their vehicles."

For vendors, the change has been mixed but somewhat stabilised. Nagalakshmi, a flower seller, said, "We fought for our place here when they took up development. It was not easy. The current arrangement is good; we have our space, shopkeepers have theirs, and walkers are happy. Continuous maintenance is the key to the longevity of the plan."

Visitors see both sides. Aakanksh Kumar, 22, said, "I usually come here to shop and grab a dose at Vidyarthi Bhavan with my grandparents. There is a lot of scope to keep the place cleaner. I think today's youth, like myself, would enjoy visiting this part of town and can vibe better than other parts of the city."

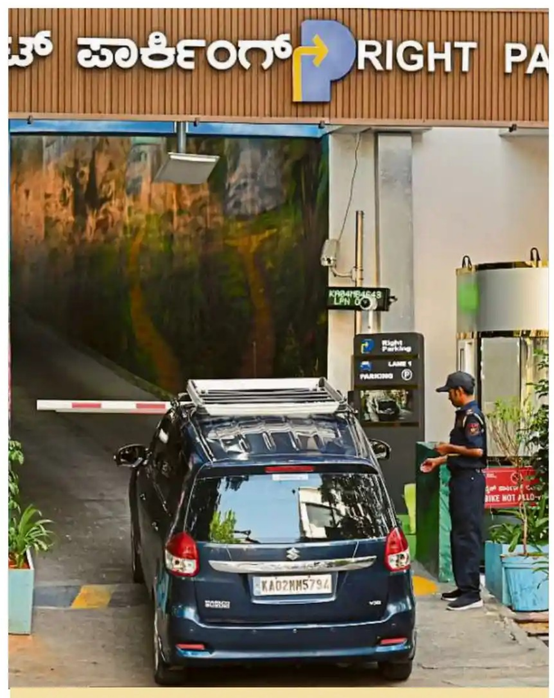
The larger question is whether this model can be replicated elsewhere in Bengaluru, given that this is the city's first project to blend parking, a hawking zone, and pedestrianisation.

The design shows it is possible to balance pedestrians, vendors and traffic, but only if enforcement and maintenance keep pace. Without that, even a well-planned street can slip back into old patterns—this is the lesson the Gandhi Bazar experiment is teaching Bengaluru.

Guruprasad Rotti, Secretary, Heritage Basavanagudi Residents Welfare Forum, explains the issues.

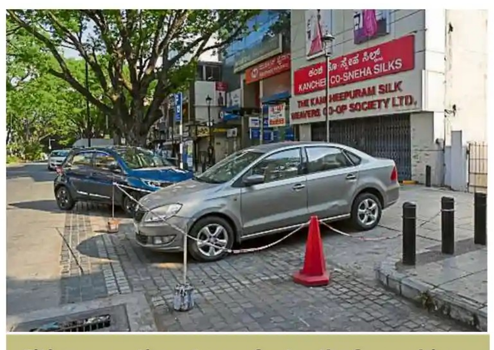
- There is a platform built for cultural programmes, which remains dysfunctional.
- There are 125 identified hawkers, but no one has an officially designated space for them. No monitoring committee has been formed, and corporation officials have not stepped in to manage the situation.
- In the TenderSURE model here, underground power cables and water networks were pushed underground. The power cables stopped working, so they had to run new lines overhead. New water lines are still not functional, so they had to route water in a parallel conservancy lane.
- There are no power connections for street vendors. They are illegally drawing power from homes and shops and paying them. Some tap power from electric poles.
- The roads have been dug up, though they are not supposed to.
- The BMTC route number 65 cannot get onto the road, because the turning radius is small. Even fire engines cannot turn easily onto the road. In a recent fire incident, fire engines took 9 minutes to travel 750 metres and finally arrived via another route.
- Traders often encroach on the footpath, and there is a court order to demarcate boundaries for traders. But no one has implemented it.
- Tiles laid out on the footpath for the visually challenged have been damaged, and no one is replacing them.
- Everyone parks everywhere, and no one cares. The newly built multi-level parking lacks a proper turning radius, making it difficult for large vehicles such as the Innova and Fortuner to enter. Moreover, since people have become habituated to not paying for parking, they prefer to park outside.
- Problems have been flagged to Bengaluru Central City Corporation Commissioner and the GBA Commissioner, but no one has inspected the area.

Feedback: pointblank@ deccanherald.co.in



The multilevel paid parking facility on Gandhi Bazaar Main Road, intended to ease congestion, sees few users due to weak enforcement and design flaws.

The Gandhi Bazaar stone signage is marred by visible graffiti.



Citizens continue to use footpaths for parking, barricading the public spaces

A broken stone bollard lies on the ground, awaiting repair

A cobblestone intersection is reportedly incomplete. No one knows what is supposed to come up in the traffic island created.

Meanwhile, vehicles occupy the widened footpath, forcing pedestrians onto the road.

METRO

Despite warnings, garbage burning leaves residents gasping, seniors struggling

Residents say smoke drifts into homes; defeats segregation efforts

ABHINAYA M
BENGALURU, DHNS

Toxic fumes rise from burnt garbage along Muddinapalya Road near Mallathahalli, exposing gaps in door-to-door waste collection in RR Nagar. DH PHOTO/NAVEEN MENEZES

Despite repeated warnings from civic authorities and pollution control agencies, illegal garbage burning continues in Peenya, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Doddenekkundi and Mahadevapura, with residents saying the problem has worsened in recent weeks.

Thick plumes of smoke from vacant plots, roadside corners and areas near industrial clusters have become a familiar sight, particularly during late evenings and early mornings. Residents say the burning violates environmental norms and poses serious health risks, especially to children and the elderly.

In Peenya, heaps of mixed waste, including plastic, rubber and industrial scrap, are routinely set on fire.

"The smoke is unbearable. It enters our homes even when the doors and windows are shut," said Ramesh Gowda, a resident of Peenya 2nd Stage. "We have elderly parents at home who struggle to breathe whenever this happens."

In Rajarajeshwari Nagar, a rapidly growing residential locality in the city's southwest, residents allege that waste collected from nearby layouts is dumped on empty sites.

However, Pradeep Kumar, who lives near Ideal Homes Township, said he had not seen garbage burning in that area.

Lakshmi Devi, another resident, said children returning from school often complain of headache and eye irritation. "We worry about long-term health effects. Burning plastic releases toxic fumes. It is frightening to think about what we are inhaling."

In Doddenekkundi, residents report similar incidents near stormwater drains and vacant government land.

"Construction debris and household waste are piled up and then set on fire," said Suresh Babu, a member of a local apartment association. "Sometimes, the flames spread dangerously close to parked vehicles."

Residents also alleged that waste collectors sometimes resort to burning excess garbage to avoid reprimand for improper segregation or overflow.

Anitha Rao, who lives in Doddenekkundi, said the smoke affects visibility on roads. "Motorists slow down because they cannot see clearly. It is a safety hazard, apart from being an environmental issue," she said.

In Mahadevapura, a densely populated IT corridor, residents allege that roadside waste, including dry leaves mixed with plastic, is frequently burnt. "We have seen sanitation workers setting fire to waste instead of transporting it," said Vivek Nair, a resident of a gated community. "This completely defeats the purpose of waste segregation."

Marshals deployed

A senior Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Ltd (BSWML) official said marshals have been deployed across the city to stop garbage burning in public places.

"There is a marked improvement in the core area. We get major complaints from the city's outskirts. Citizens must understand that burning garbage causes severe air pollution. Their duty is to segregate waste and hand it over to us," he said.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Bodhi Saptaha Inauguration: Mahabodhi Society; Mahabodhi Society, Gandhinagar; 8 am.

Law Teachers' Convention: Inauguration by V Gopala Gowda; Presided over by BT Kaul; Guests: C Basavaraju, GB Reddy, and MR Anandaram; MS Ramaiah College of Law, MSR Nagar; 10 am.

Book Launch: Release of 'Asamakaaleenaru' by CN Ramesh; Launch by L Hanumanthaiah and 'Mukhyamantri' Chandru; Talk by K Rajkumar; Presided over by Sandhya Reddy; Prestige Falcon City Hall, next to Konanakunte metro station; 10 am.

Ambedkar Jayanti: Lecture by Shivaraj BE; St Francis College; 10.45 am.

CULTURAL

Nadoja Ko Chennabasappa Award Presentation: Award to be presented to G Ramakrishna by K Marulasiddappa; Inauguration by Wooday P Krishna; Presided over by Shanta Jayaprasad; Vachana singing by Anoop Seelin; Gandhi Bhavan, Kumara Krupa Road; 10.30 am.

Monthly Book Discussion: Discussion on Amaresh Nugadoni's book 'Dada Serisu Thande'; Guests include Basavaraja Kalgudi and Amaresh Nugadoni; Beetle Book Shop, opposite Basaveshwara College, Vijayanagar; 4 pm.

Narasimha Shatanadarchanam: Centenary celebration of Ganjigunte Narasimha Murthy; Inaugurated by Hampa Nagarajaiah; Presided over by TA Balakrishna; Ramaswamy Hall, Vijaya PU College Campus, Jayanagar 4th Block; 5 pm.

Bangarada Manushya Raj Dance Tribute: Guests include Jayamala, SA Chinne Gowda, MK Sundar Raj, and Ashwini Gowda; Sharma's Madhuri Dance Academy; Ravindra Kalakshetra, JC Road; 5 pm.

Invites to be published in this column should be sent to: **incitytoday@deccanherald.co.in.** Please note that hard copies will not be accepted

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST

Partly cloudy sky

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	35.6°C
Minimum	24.6°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 am)	23%
Sunset (April 25)	6:33 pm
Sunrise (April 26)	6:02 am
Moonrise	12:29 pm
Moonset	00:45 am

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

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Kadabagere-Tavarekere line...

Metro, from Flap Page

While RITES is studying the double-decker's feasibility, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Roorkee, has examined the potential impact on metro operations.

"We have addressed all concerns raised by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), which had sent a director to resolve the issues related to the cost and double-decker component. We plan to submit the revised DPR to the state government by mid-May. After a quick appraisal, the state will then send it to the ministry for approval," the source explained. The Centre's approvals process is well-defined but lengthy, taking up to a year.

The DPR is first reviewed by the Institute of Urban Transport (IUT), a technical body under the ministry, before being sent for inter-ministerial consultations, which take about seven months. It is then sent to the Network Planning Group (NPG) and the Public Investment Board (PIB) before being placed before the Union cabinet for final approval. After approval, the BMRCL typically takes a year to award civil contracts. Work is expected to start by the end of 2027, with a five-year completion timeline. The BMRCL is also preparing the DPR for a 16-km metro line from KR Puram to Hoskote. The report is expected in a few months.

College staff force students to remove 'janivara' detained

Janivara, From Page 1

The Deputy Commissioner of Bengaluru Urban district, Jagadeesha G, has constituted a committee headed by Additional Deputy Commissioner to conduct an inquiry into the incident and submit a report within two days.

The opposition, BJP, accused the Congress government of being 'Anti-Hindu'. Leader of the Opposition, R Ashoka said, "Doesn't it catch the eye of Siddaramaiah, who loves to lecture endlessly about the Constitution, that the religious freedom of a student wearing the sacred thread has been violated?"

Ashoka met the Bengaluru City Police Commissioner, Seemant Kumar Singh, and urged him to ensure that such incidents are not repeated.

"We demand a detailed inquiry into the incident. It is clear that they did it on purpose and this should end here," he added.

Akhila Karnataka Brahmana Mahasabha has appealed to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to take action and also demanded the disaffiliation of the college.

The incident

According to the students, as soon as they entered the examination centre on Thursday, the staff insisted that they remove the earrings, threads on their hands, and also the 'janivara'. "I resisted first and called my parents. But since I was in a hurry to write the exam, I agreed to remove it and kept the sacred thread in my pocket and went inside," said one of the students.

Sharing the details about the incident, Harish, a parent, said, "First, my son was asked to remove an earring, then a thread tied on his hand. He agreed to remove these two items and later, he was called back and forced to remove the 'janivara'. He called his mother on the phone and she rushed to the college. Though the thread wasn't cut, he removed it and handed it over to her."

Sudheendra, another parent, said, "When my son was asked to remove the thread, he called me and asked if he could remove it. I told him not to take it off. But by then, he had removed it. After the first paper, I went to the principal's chamber. All three parents were asked to wait for 45 minutes and later, the blame was shifted to the D group staff. The principal told us that they had trained the staff not to ask students to remove mangalsutra, Janivara, or any other religious items."

The authorities of KEA have clarified that there were no instructions or regulations to ask the students to remove any religious identities. "This year we deputed trained officers to check and also informed the students to reach the centre two hours before time to get checked," said H Prasanna, Executive Director KEA. Reacting to the incident, Higher Education Minister Dr MC Sudhakar said that action will be initiated against the staff and principal of the college and even a police complaint will be filed. "I feel some people are intentionally doing this to tarnish the image of the government," he said.

Meanwhile, the minister even informed that the Deputy Commissioner of the Bengaluru Urban district has been asked to submit the report on the incident, as he was the custodian of the exams.

No funds or staff to conduct GBA polls by June 30: SEC tells SC

GBA Polls, From Page 1

It stated that the Chief Commissioner, Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), addressed a letter on April 6, 2026, to the State Election Commission, requesting an extension of time for the conduct of elections to the five city corporations and requesting that the election may be considered to be completed by September 30.

"The reason cited by the Chief Commissioner was that the census-related activities would commence from 16/04/2026 and continue up to 15/05/2026, and during that time, the administrative and field-level staff under GBA will be busy and deployed for the said exercise. Another reason cited was that the Election Commission of India was expected to schedule the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Karnataka from April 2026," the application pointed out.

Immediately thereafter, the SEC secured the legal opinion and thereafter addressed a letter to the Chief Secretary about the deadline and that the Election Commission of India had also not published any timetable for conducting the SIR work in Karnataka to date.

The application also stated that the SEC is completely dependent on the state government and its authorities to provide the logistical support, staff, infrastructure, and funds for the purpose of conducting the GBA elections.

"It is necessary to state that the SEC has no funds for conducting the election and has been requesting the state government to release the funds urgently for the purpose of being utilised to conduct the election to GBA," the SEC said, seeking appropriate orders from the court.

Kuki-Naga clashes claim 3...

Manipur, From Page 1

Both were "village volunteers", who tried to defend their villages against the attack, the KIM said, adding that Naga armed persons also burnt 17 houses and injured several others in Mullam and Shongphal villages.

The Central Command of Naga Village Guard in Ukhrul, in a similar statement, said Horshokmi Jamang, 29, a "Naga village guard", died after Kuki armed cadres belonging to the groups in Suspension of Operations Agreement attacked the Sinakeithei village. It said "Naga village guards" came under attack when they were on a "patrol duty" following repeated attacks on the village.

The killings on Friday took the death toll since April 7, both in the Meitei-dominated Imphal Valley and in the Kuki and Naga-dominated hills, to 11. The sporadic attacks despite installation of a new chief minister in February have led many to question the Centre's interest in finding a solution to the conflict that began in May 2023. "All top leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, are busy in elections. The Centre imposed the President's rule, deployed the central forces and even changed the CM. But as the situation now stands, the only solution now lies in reorganisation of the state," said Gaidon Kamei, a Naga leader.

Janghaolun Haokip, the KIM information secretary, stressed that "immediate and decisive steps are essential to restore confidence, uphold the rule of law and ensure peace and stability". Kukis says a Union Territory comprising the Kuki-dominated areas is the only solution to the conflict. Meiteis are opposed to bifurcation of Manipur and have been demanding a National Register of Citizens to detect "illegal Chin-Kuki migrants" from neighbouring Myanmar. They have also been demanding a crackdown against the Kuki armed persons.

SHRI SAIBABA SANSTHAN TRUST, SHIRDI

At.Post. Shirdi, Tal- Rahata, Dist. A.Nagar - 423 109
Phone No.(02423) 258671/258676
(Website - www.sai.org.in) E-mail - hospital.purchase@sai.org.in

E-Tender Notice

Shree Saibaba Sansthan Trust, Shirdi invites online E-tender for the purchase of Annual Medicine / Dental / X-ray-CT-MRI Films /Laboratory Chemicals / O.T. Surgical / Dialysis / Miscellaneous Material /Ayurvedic Medicine / Suture Material / Cathlab & Cardiac Material / On Consignment Basis Material for Shree Saibaba & Shree Sainath Hospital from primary manufacturer / Importer / company authorized distributor. The tender details will be available on website www.mahatenders.gov.in for downloading. For details and terms & conditions visit our official website www.sai.org.in

Tender submission starts date-23/04/2026,
Pre-bid Meeting date 27/04/2026.
Tender submission end date 13/05/2026.

Sd/-
Goraksha Gadilkar, I.A.S
Chief Executive Officer

क्रमांक : आरओसी-2026-27/क्र-5/C379

वित्त मंत्रालय MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Quarterly Return Monthly Payment (QRMP)

A step towards ease of doing business for **small taxpayers** having **Aggregate Annual Turnover up to ₹ 5 Crore during the F.Y. 2025-26**

The eligible taxpayers who wish to avail the QRMP scheme may opt in by performing the following steps on the GST portal **(www.gst.gov.in)**

Log in to the Taxpayers' Interface

Go to Services > Returns > Opt-in for quarterly return option

TAXPAYERS ALREADY AVAILING QRMP SCHEME ARE NOT REQUIRED TO REAPPLY FOR THE SCHEME

Benefits

- File GST Statements/Returns in FORM GSTR-1 & GSTR-3B just once in a Quarter
- Easily opt in and opt out of the Scheme
- Enjoy the convenience of a Flexible Invoice Furnishing Facility (IFF)
- Self Assessment of ITC & Tax once every Quarter

Pay monthly Tax conveniently using Fixed Sum Method (Pre-filled Challan) or Self-Assessment Method (actual tax due after adjusting ITC) in the first two months of a Quarter

Last date to opt for QRMP Scheme from Q1 of F.Y. 2026-27 is 30th April, 2026

Eligible registered person can opt in for any quarter from first day of second month of preceding quarter to the last day of the first month of the quarter

For more details, please refer to Notification No. 81 to 85/2020-Central Tax & Circular No. 143/13/2020-GST all dated 10.11.2020

Please scan for more details on QRMP scheme

GST Return Filing: Fast, Easy and Simplified

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CBC 15502/13/0001/2627

URANIUM CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED
(A Government of India Enterprise) (CIN: U 12000 JH 1967 GOI 000806)
PO: Jaduguda Mines, Dist: East Singhbhum, Jharkhand 832 102
Website: www.uraniumcorp.in

RECRUITMENT OF PROFESSIONALS
Advertisement No : UCIL-09-2026

Uranium Corporation of India Limited has invited online applications from Indian citizens for various post as follows:

01	Assistant Manager (Accounts)	09	Assistant Superintendent (Mines)
02	Additional Manager (Accounts)	10	Dy. Superintendent (Civil)
03	Manager(Accounts)	11	Assistant Controller of Purchase
04	Dy.General Manager (Personnel)	12	Dy.Controller of Purchase
05	Additional Manager(Personnel)	13	Additional Superintendent (Env. Engg.)
06	Assistant Manager (Security & Admin.)	14	Assistant Superintendent (Industrial Engg.)
07	Dy. Manaser (Security & Admin.)	15	Foreman (Mining)
08	Additional Manager (Legal)		

Full details of vacancies viz. Qualification, Experience, Scale of pay etc are available at UCIL website **www.uraniumcorp.in.** Any queries/information/extension/ corrigendum etc. with respect to this advertisement shall be made available on the UCIL website **www.uraniumcorp.in** only

Last date of submission of online application is 19/05/2026

CBC 48134/12/0005/2627

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
ROAD CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT, ROAD DIVISION, DUMKA

2ND CORRIGENDUM DETAILS of NIT
TENDER REFERENCE No.- RCD/DUMKA/514, PR 377745 Road (26-27)_D

NAME OF THE WORK - Construction of High Level Bridge over Dhowae River at ch 41st km and Construction of High Level Bridge over Mudko River at ch 30th km of Dumka-Hansdiha Road under Road Division Dumka for the year 2026-27.
CORRIGENDUM DETAIL of NIT

4	Date of Publication of Tender on Website – 05.05.2026 10:30 AM **in place of** 23.04.2026 10:30 AM
5	Last date/Time for receipt of bids03.06.2026 Up to 12.00 Noon **in place of** 19.05.2026 Up to 12.00 Noon
6	Date of opening of Tender – 04.06.2026 at 12.30 PM **in place of** 20.05.2026 at 12.30 PM

Other terms and conditions shall remain unchanged.

Executive Engineer
Road Construction Department,
Road Division, Dumka

PR 378300 Road(26-27)#D

कार्यालय :– जिला स्वास्थ्य समिति, कोडरमा
Sadar Hospital Campus, Koderma (Jharkhand) 825410
E-mail:- cs.koderma4@gmail.com

संशोधित सूचना

कोडरमा जिला स्वास्थ्य विभाग अंतर्गत दवा / चिकित्सीय सामाग्री का कय किये जाने हेतु ई–निविदा सूचना 05 / 2026 का प्रकाशन किया गया था। जिसका PR Number 375769 है। जिसमें सेवाशर्त एवं अवधि विस्तार की आवश्यकता को देखते हुए ऑन लाइन निविदा की तिथि में निम्नलिखित आंशिक संशोधन किया जाता है:–

Si no	Name of Work	संशोधित तिथि
1	Last Date/time for Submission of bids (Online)	04-05-2026 till 04.00 P.M
2	Bid Opening Date (Technical)	05-05-2026 at 04.00 P.M (C.S. Office Koderma)

Sl. No	Criteria	Revised Document to be submitted
1	Government Department Work Order	A) Must have received minimum Order from Jharkhand Govt Health Department for having value amount more than or equal to 200 LACs in three years (2025-26, 2024-25, 2023-24). One of the orders must be of minimum 25 lacs
13	NABCB certified QMS certificate Issued before the Bid Published Date	Omitted. ISO 9001:2015 & ISO 10002:2018 certificate is required.

नोटः अन्य शर्ते यथावत रहेगा।

मुख्य चिकित्सा पदाधिकारी सह
मुख्य कार्यपालक पदाधिकारी
जिला स्वास्थ्य समिति कोडरमा।

PR 378347 (Health Med Edu and Family Welfare) 26-27 (D)

CCB busts prostitution racket, four arrested

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Central Crime Branch (CCB) of the Bengaluru police busted a prostitution racket and arrested four people, including three women, in the city.

Police rescued six women who the suspects had exploited. Investigators acted on information that women were being solicited into prostitution in spas near Marathahalli and Sunkadakatte.

Raids were conducted on different dates at the identified locations, and the six women were rescued, police said.

"In connection with the offence, four people, including three women who had forced/induced the victims into prostitution, were taken into custody. During interrogation, the accused confessed that they used to contact men seeking prostitution services over the phone and invite them to spas and the house, where the illegal activities were carried out for monetary gain," police said.

Drinking water remains a mirage in N-K villages as RO plants lie defunct

Groundwater depletion adds to water woes in region

VITTAL SHASTRI
KALABURAGI, DHNS

Pure drinking water has remained a distant dream for people of rural Karnataka amid rising temperatures due to delays, lack of funding and substandard work in the implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission. According to the Rural Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Department, of the 19,652 reverse osmosis (RO) plants, 3,382 have remained defunct in the state despite funds being allotted for their repairs.

A large number of residents rely only on borewells for their drinking water since operating and maintaining these RO plants has become a challenge for gram panchayats.

Depleting groundwater due to the drop in water levels in reservoirs, ponds and lakes has made the problem acute. According to estimates from grassroots workers, 40% of people in North Karnataka depend on water contaminated by fluoride. Officials attribute this problem to the failure of the agency concerned and gram panchayats to maintain RO plants.

Defunct RO plants, high fluoride and arsenic content and a dilapidated pipeline network have resulted in water contamination, often leading to severe health crises and deaths in Yadgir and other districts over the last 2-3 years.

Defunct RO plants, high fluoride and arsenic content and a dilapidated pipeline network have resulted in water contamination. DH FILE PHOTO FOR REPRESENTATION

Sewage seepage into broken drinking water pipelines has resulted in acute vomiting and diarrhoea with villagers expressing their anger towards officials for failing to supply pure drinking water.

"Several people in our village were hospitalised two years ago after drinking contaminated water from borewells that are 30 years old. Around 60% of the people fetch water from the same borewells whose casing pipes have rusted. The poor drainage system results in water contamination, jeopardising people's health," said former gram panchayat member Basanagouda Policepatil of Chikanhalli in Surpur taluk.

Raichur zilla panchayat CEO Ishwar Kumar Kandoo claimed that around 130 RO plants out of a total 716 are not working in the district and Rs 50,000 each is being spent to repair 91 plants. He claimed that officials are conducting joint inspections in all villages to prevent water contamination.

"New RO plants are being constructed with allocations from KKRDB funds and other sources. Directions have been given to clean around 800 overhead tanks once in 15-20 days. There is some biological contamination and strict orders have been issued to close such borewells. These plants are maintained directly by gram panchayatss," Kandoo said.

Meanwhile, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Priyank Kharge said the government is trying to find a permanent solution for proper maintenance of the RO plants in the long-run.

Rape on false promise of marriage: HC orders maintenance

AMBARISH B
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Karnataka High Court on Friday granted conditional stay on the proceedings in a case of repeated rape on the pretext of false promise of marriage registered against Krishna J Rao, son of Jagannivas Rao, former BJP member of the Puttur City Municipal Council. Justice M Nagaprasanna passed the interim order subject to the condition that Rs 75,000 per month as maintenance is paid to the survivor and her 10-month-old child.

"It is an admitted fact that the petitioner (Krishna J Rao) is the biological father of the child that is now born and the DNA test has revealed that he is the father. Therefore, Rs 75,000 month on month maintenance till the disposal of the petition has to be paid to ensure the sustenance and welfare of the mother and the 10-month-old baby. The first instalment has to be paid on or before May 1, 2026. The measure, though interim, seeks to alleviate the immediate hardship faced by the complainant's family who currently finds themselves in a state of abandonment," Justice Nagaprasanna said.

The petitioner has challenged the crime registered for offences under BNS sections 64(2)(m) and 69 for repeated rape and having sexual intercourse on the false promise of marriage. The petitioner and the survivor were classmates. It was alleged that the petitioner had a physical relationship with her after promising to marry her. The survivor gave birth to the child on June 28, 2025. On July 5, 2025, the petitioner was arrested and his father too was arrested for allegedly helping his son to evade arrest.

The counsel for the petitioner submitted that the acts alleged were consensual and both were in love, hence, would not become an offence under section 64 (2) (m) or 69 of BNS. On the other hand, the counsel for the complainant submitted that the mother of the survivor is a housekeeping staff and the father a daily wage employee and they are left in the lurch with a child.

Justice Nagaprasanna noted the matter cannot be confined to consensual acts and granted a blanket stay of further proceedings. The court also noted that there is an interim order of stay granted to the parents of the petitioner, also accused in the case, in two separate criminal petitions.

"The child born from the acts of the petitioner and the complainant is now merely 10 months old. The evident hardship faced by the complainant and the family cannot be brushed aside. A child has been brought into the world and both the child and the mother find themselves in a state of vulnerability, left to navigate the consequences of the petitioner's actions. While the petitioner may yet be a student, such considerations, cannot eclipse the pressing needs of the child and the mother. Justice, in its equitable dimension, demands a balanced approach," Justice Nagaprasanna said.

The court further said, "The counsel for the complainant undertakes that the matter shall not be sensationalised or taken to the media. It is therefore directed that the complainant, her family and relatives shall exercise restraint and refrain from engaging with the press or media, until the subject matter reaches its judicial conclusion."

Lack of staff dampens visitors' experience at Shivappa Nayaka Palace

NRUPATHUNGA S K
SHIVAMOGGA, DHNS

The Shivappa Nayaka Palace in Shivamogga was the first monument in Karnataka to be refurbished under the Smart Cities Project.

Now that it has been reopened to the public after eight years, the lack of adequate personnel, including qualified guides, is putting a dampener on the visitors' experience of the palace.

Local officials have written to the Commissioner of the Department of Archaeology, Museums and Heritage asking for 20 personnel to be appointed so visitors to the palace can return with a treasure trove of fond memories.

Assistant Director (incharge) of Archaeology, Museums and Heritage Department, Shivamogga, Kumar HC said that they had outsourced visitor management to just one person. "He is doubling up as a caretaker and guide. Given that we are in the midst of a summer vacation, the number of students visiting the palace is high. We need at least 20 more personnel to run the place efficiently," Kumar told *DH*.

A view of the newly renovated Shivappa Nayaka palace in Shivamogga city.

The palace needs four guides, preferably those with postgraduate degrees in History, to take visitors on an informative journey through the palace, said Kumar. "We also need two gardeners to tend to the lawn, four helpers, an electrician, someone to man the ticket counter and other Group D staff. A tender will soon be invited for appointing staff to the palace. Gallery assistants will also need to work as guides," he added.

Once the ticket vending machine is installed, tickets, priced at Rs 20, will be dispensed through the machine itself, said Kumar.

Interpretative screens installed in the palace's galleries provide information on various historical artefacts that were excavated by ASI.

Augmented and virtual reality technology employed at the palace bring the various historical artefacts to life, which visitors can actually touch and feel. The Shivappa Nayaka was constructed by Venkatappa Nayaka of the Keladi Nayaka dynasty in the 17th century.

CENTRAL RAILWAY
SOLAPUR DIVISION
PROVISION OF SIGNALING SYSTEM

Tender Notice No. SUR-N-T-2026-27-04 Date: 22.04.2026

DRM(S&T)'s Office, Central Railway, Solapur for and on behalf of President of India invites online e-tenders on Railway's e-procurement website **www.ireps.gov.in** from the capable, reputed firms/Contractors for the following works:- **Name of work with its locality:** Provision of Signaling system for improvement in Safety and Traffic flow at Latur station & provision of DAC in vulnerable locations like waterlogged, mud and muck track circuits for Enhanced Safety and Efficiency in Solapur Division of Central Railway, **Tender No.:** SUR-N-T-2026-27-04, **Approximate Cost of the work:** Rs. 3,29,03,262.04, **Cost of the work:** NIL, **Earnest money to be deposited:** Rs. 6,58,100/-, **Completion period of the work:** 12 Months, **Date & Time of Closing of tender:** 15.05.2026 after 15:30 Hrs. The details are available in ireps website. Corrigendum/ amendments if any will be uploaded only on above e-procurement website. Only online tenders will be accepted. Manual/ postal/e-mail, FAX, by hand tenders will not be accepted. Bidders are requested to obtain Class III Digital Signature Certificate with company name and register the same with **www.ireps.gov.in.** The Payment of Earnest Money (EMD) will be accepted through net banking or payment gateway or in the form of Bank Guarantee and the original Bank Guarantee should be delivered in person to the official nominated as indicated in the tender document before closing date for submission of bids (i.e. excluding the last date of submission of bids). For further details please visit **www.ireps.gov.in.**

Divisional Railway Manager, S&T Branch **Central Railway, Solapur**
DE/Sur-23

TRAVEL SAFELY, AVOID FOOTBOARD TRAVELLING

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. ECN-TRD-04-2026
Dated : 18-04-2026

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work:

Name of work	Approx. Value
Electrification of Proposed Construction of New Crossing station at SRAVANUR with structures /foundation suitable for 2x25kv OHE.	Rs. 2,56,82,475.13

Last date for submission of bids:
Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 14-05-2026

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Keep visiting the website for any corrigendum till closing date

Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer/Traction Distribution-II (Construction) Bengaluru Cantonment
PUB/52/AAF/PRB/SWR/2026-27

Download the RailOne app for easy ticket booking, PNR status, and more railway services.

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRAILWAYHQ | sw_railways

S. E. RAILWAY – E-TENDER

Tender Notice No.: PCMM/GENL/TP/2026/13, Dated: 24.04.2026. Tender for "E" Procurement System. The Principal Chief Materials Manager, South Eastern Railway, Hd. Qrs. Office (5th Floor), New Administrative Building, 11, Garden Reach Road, Kolkata-700043 for and on behalf of the President of India invites open E-tenders which have been uploaded on website **www.ireps.gov.in** as follows. All the tenders will be closed **at 14.00 hrs**.

Sl. No.	Tender No.	Closing Date	Brief Description	Quantity	EMD amount (₹)
1	46263093	15.05.2026	Ratchet Assembly for Coupling Socket Assembly etc.	2346 Nos.	7,60,350
2	HB 247531D	11.05.2026	Supply, installation, testing & commissioning of Automatic ceiling mounted modular fire extinguisher 5 kg capacity each etc.	75 Nos.	1,56,670
3	29263815	08.05.2026	Set of Labyrinth and Bearing Cap (DE).	2031 Set	10,76,020
4	29261319	11.05.2026	Main compressor (Oil Lubricated) including motor.	12 Mtrs.	2,01,190
5	29263816	12.05.2026	Set of Labyrinth and Bearing Cap & Clamp Plate (NDE).	1771 Set	15,90,510
6	29261317	13.05.2026	Grossrad main Gear, 107 Teeth	221 Nos.	6,07,770
7	29260031	15.05.2026	Set of Cylindrical Roller Bearing for MSU Tube etc.	991 Set	12,43,630
8	IF256183B	18.05.2026	Design, Supply and commissioning of friction buffer Stop (Pre-Bid Conference on 28.04.2026 at 10.00 hrs. in Sr.DMM/CKP office)	22 Nos.	3,99,780
9	IF265418	18.05.2026	Interactive KIOSK	68 Set	1,33,190
10	HB265735	11.05.2026	Running Contract for Inj. Insulin Degludec 70% + Insulin Aspart 30%, 100 IU/ml, 3 ml. Cartridge etc.	5556 Nos.	1,15,510
11	IF255929	20.05.2026	Supply of LT distribution panel	07 Set	1,22,510
12	33263304	05.06.2026	Earthing Cable complete 70 Sq. mm. for LHB Coach.etc.	29400 Nos.	3,06,590
13	30263037	03.06.2026	Leveling Valve etc.	1110 Nos.	1,04,840
14	30263006	27.05.2026	Hytrel Upper Washer etc.	2818 Nos.	1,11,400
15	30263087	29.05.2026	Supporting Device of CBC Fitted etc.	323 Nos.	1,21,960
16	60260130	11.05.2026	Manufacturing & Supply of Fish Plate for Glued Insulated Rail Joint for BG 60 (UIC)/ 60E1 on PSC Sleeper etc.	4210 Nos.	1,85,300
17	60265142	20.05.2026	Manufacturing and Supply of Prestressed Concrete sleeper (Pretensioned type) etc.	1500 Set	15,60,780
18	33265003	30.04.2026	Seats for LHB Non AC Chair car coaches etc.	10 Set	2,43,970
19	50251659B	12.05.2026	Solid Polythene Insulated Fully Filled, Polythene Sheathed Underground Telecom Cable etc.	15 Km	1,47,760
20	29261318	18.05.2026	Oil Cooler Radiator for Converter Transformer	123 Nos.	12,56,050
21	38263338	18.05.2026	Yoke Pin for up-graded HT-CBC	10490 Nos.	2,90,640
22	38264042	20.05.2026	Set of Nested Snubber spring Outer & Inner for LWLH 25T Bogie	1153 Set	1,18,370
23	38263919	27.05.2026	Floor Channel (stringer inner) for BOXNHL Wagon	4083 Nos.	1,10,810
24	38263365	29.05.2026	Brake Cylinder 11" with double acting automatic slack adjuster	325 Nos.	2,72,480
25	38263003	08.06.2026	NEI make "Backing ring" for Class E CTRB	4440 Nos.	1,36,220
26	38263917	01.06.2026	Crib/End angle for BOXNHL Wagon	6800 Nos.	2,05,410
27	29263255	15.05.2026	NI-CD Batteries, Capacity 199 AH C5A	138 Set	18,40,160
28	29263061	20.05.2026	Set of Filter Assembly for WAG9 Loco	85 Set	4,74,420
29	29261314	21.05.2026	Motor suspension unit for 3phase loco	541 Set	19,90,250
30	29260016	22.05.2026	High Tensile Transition C.B. Coupler	240 Nos.	5,40,710
31	25253721	28.05.2026	Set of loco cab meters	39 Set	1,13,510
32	25263622	09.06.2026	Microprocessor based Electronic speed cum energy monitoring system	18 Nos.	1,05,010

Interested tenderers may visit website **www.ireps.gov.in** for full details/ description/specification of the tenders and submit their bids online. In no case manual tenders for these items will be accepted. **N.B:** Prospective Bidders may regularly visit **www.ireps.gov.in** to participate in all other tenders & any corrigendum published thereafter. **(PR-88)**

SHRI LAL BAHADUR SHASTRI NATIONAL SANSKRIT UNIVERSITY
(Central University)
B-4, Qutab Institutional Area, New Delhi -110016

The University invites online applications for regular recruitment to various categories of non-teaching positions. For details, please visit the University website **https://www.slbsrsv.ac.in**
The last date for receipt of online application is 21.05.2026

CBC 21371/11/0001/2627 **Sd/- REGISTRAR**

CORRIGENDUM NO. 4

Corrigendum No. 4 for Tender Notice No.: DY.CEE/CON/RE-II/MLG/01/2026; **dtd.:** 04-02-2026 **against Tender No.** EL-CON-MLG-09-2025-26-D-K.

SN	Website Tender Notice detail before corrigendum, **EXISTINGS**	After the corrigendum in suppression of previous details, **TO BE READ AS**
1	**Closing of Tender:** 30-04-2026, 11:00 Hrs. **Physical submission of Mandatory Document listed in clause 2.11.2:-** 06-05-2026, 11:00 Hrs. **Opening of tender:-** 07-05-2026, 16:00 hrs	**Closing of Tender:** 11-05-2026, 11:00 Hrs. **Physical submission of Mandatory Document listed in clause 2.11.2:-** 15-05-2026, 11:00 Hrs. **Opening of tender:-** 18-05-2026, 16:00 hrs

N.B.: Other terms and conditions of tender will remain same. For Detail please visit N.F. Railway website **www.ireps.gov.in**

AEE/CON/HQ, Maligaon
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Construction Organization
Serving Customers With A Smile

Government of Jharkhand
Urban Development and Housing Department
Dhanbad Municipal Corporation, Dhanbad

e-Procurement Re Tender Notice No. DMC/05/2026-27
NIT No.- DMC/05/2026-27 **Date :- 24.04.2026**

1.	Name of the work	**Rejuvenation of Ranibandh Talab Under DMC, Dhanbad**
2.	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	Rs. **4,16,37,000.00**
3.	Tender Fee and Bid Security	Tender document fee: - INR 10,000/- (Ten Thousand Only) Non-Refundable. Bid Security: Rs **416370.00** (Rupees Four Lakh Sixteen Thousand Three Hundred & Seventy Only).
4.	Time of Completion	330 Days
5.	Date / Time of Publication of Tender on Website	02.05.2026 at 03:00 PM
6.	Start Date of Submission of Bids	21.05.2026 at 03:00 PM
7.	Last Date / Time for receipt of bids Online	21.05.2026 (On line) till 03:00 PM
8.	Date and Time of Technical Bid Opening Online.	22.05.2026 (On line) from 03:00 PM
9.	Name & address of office Inviting tender	Chief Executive Officer, Dhanbad Municipal corporation,Dhanbad.
10.	Helpline number of e-Procurement cell	**8986892064**
11.	e-mail id	**Dhanbadmunicipal corporationadm@gmail.com**

NOTE:- (i) Only e-Tenders will be accepted. Further details can be seen on website http://www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in.
(ii) Contractor should be registered in Class (I) First class as per NIT
(iii) Estimated Cost / Quantity May Vary
(iv) Any Change/Information can be seen on Website on http://www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in.

Executive Engineer,
Dhanbad Municipal Corporation, Dhanbad
PR 378343 Urban Development and Housing (26-27)_D

Making Road & Rail Travel Safer for
the people of Tumakuru Region

"We are committed to building infrastructure that is safe, sustainable, and accessible for all."
— Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

Laying of Foundation Stones for

Pedestrian Subway at Old Level Crossing Gate No. 36 Near Kyatsandra Station, Tumakuru
and
Pedestrian Subway between Kyatsandra & Tumakuru Railway Station at Maruthinagar, Tumakuru

Benefits

- Better pedestrian safety for local residents, including elderly citizens and children
- Smooth train operations by preventing trespassing on tracks
- Fulfillment of long-pending demands of local residents
- Minimizes risk of accidents and ensures safer daily commuting

by

V. SOMANNA
Union Minister of State for Railways and Jal Shakti

Saturday, 25th April, 2026

09.30 a.m. | **Old Level Crossing Gate No. 36, Near Kyatsandra Station**

You are cordially invited

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Set up heat stroke mgmt rooms, govt hospitals told

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Health Department has asked all the district and taluk hospitals to set up heat stroke management rooms with dedicated beds to treat patients with Heat Related Illnesses (HRI).

In a circular issued on Friday, Community Health Centres were directed to keep aside two beds, taluk hospitals five beds, and district hospitals at least 10 beds for HRI patients.

The rooms are to be kept operational till July 31 and should be equipped with thermometers, fans, and ice cubes, the circular said.

That apart, medical and para-medical staff should also be trained to ensure they are prepared to test for any HRI.

The government will also set up ORS corners in every government health facility.

Health and Family Welfare minister Dinesh Gundu Rao, on Thursday, had said that the government was prepared to treat any heat related illnesses and urged people to follow precautionary measures. "Avoid going out when it is too hot and keep yourself hydrated. We have also already issued an advisory asking people to take some measures," he said.

Internal quota: Alemaris term revised formula 'social injustice'

Say 20% share within Group C an 'eyewash'

H V MANJUNATH
Advocate

"The BJP went against the Constitutional principle of providing reservation on socio-educational basis by including economic backwardness as a criteria. Even the current move, which tries to adjust reservation to favour political motives, is against that principle.

SUJAY B M
BENGALURU, DHNS

The state government's 'pragmatic' decision to recalibrate reservation for Scheduled Castes (SCs) from 17% to 15% as per the 5.25 - 5.25 - 4.5 formula has disappointed the nomadic (alemari) communities, which has been fighting for over 8 months for a separate 1% quota share.

Accordingly, Group A including Madiga and 15 communities will get 5.25%, Group B including Holeya and 18 communities will get 5.25%, while Group C including Lambani, Bhovi, Korma and Korcha and 59 'most backward' communities will get 4.5%.

The decision continues the spirit of the state government's 6-6-5 formula (17%) for internal reservation, which was challenged in the High Court by the Confederation of Untouchable Nomadic Communities of Karnataka.

Just as in the 6-6-5 formula, the three major SC groups - SC (left)/ Madiga, SC (Right)/ Holeya and the group comprising Lambani, Bhovi, Korma and Korcha communities - have obtained their specific share within the new pie, while the nomadic communities - which have a population of 5.22 lakh - continue to be denied their share. The Alemari communities have slammed the replacement of the 1-6-5-4-1 formula of the Justice H N Nagamohan Das Commission report (1% for 59 'most backward' communities, 6% for Madiga and 17 affiliated 'more backward' communities, 5% for Holeya and 16 affiliated 'backward' communities, 4% for Lambani, Bhovi, Korma and Korcha communities defined as less backward and 1% for the Adi Karnataka, Adi Dravida and Adi Andhra communities) with the 6-6-5 formula terming it as "unscientific."

Despite modifications in the Karnataka Scheduled Castes (Sub-Classification) Bill, 2025, which guarantees the 1% share for Alemaris within Group C, Alemari community leaders and social justice proponents have slammed the very decision to club the 'less backward' Lambani, Bhovi, Korma and Korcha communities with the 59 'most backward communities' as "social injustice."

Experts have argued that the plight of the nomadic communities is linked to their lack of political representation. While the other three SC communities have representation within the Cabinet, the nomadic communities do not have any representation.

In fact, Kolar MLA Kothur Manjunath from the Congress is the only representative of the 59 'most backward' communities in the Karnataka Legislative Assembly (224 seats overall).

50% quota cap

The current decision follows the High Court's directive to not cross the 50% ceiling for reservations set by the Supreme Court in the Indra Sawhney Case in 1992.

While the government has continued its 'pragmatic' stance on the issue, the decision to include internal reservation while recruiting 56,432 jobs may help the more backward communities amongst SCs.

Additionally, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah also announced that the 20% share for the Alemari communities within group C will also be continued in the current 4.5% basket. Advocate H V Manjunath chastised the decision to provide 20% reservation for the nomadic communities within group C as an "eyewash."

Sources told *DH* that the Alemari community was likely to move the High Court, again, over the same claim - the government neglecting inter-se backwardness while providing internal reservation.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah inaugurates the Global Agri-Tech Summit 2026, organised by the Federation of Karnataka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in Bengaluru on Friday. Minister N Chaluvaraya Swamy and FKCCI President Uma Reddy among others are seen. PHOTO: CMO

B'luru should become agri-tech capital just like IT hub: CM

'Benefits of AI and mechanisation must reach last mile for holistic growth'

BENGALURU, DHNS

Bengaluru must become the Agri-Tech capital, much as it stands tall in the IT sector, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said on Friday, inaugurating the three-day Global Agri-Tech Summit 2026 at Palace Grounds.

The event, organised by the Federation of Karnataka Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FKCCI) in collaboration with UAS Bengaluru, aims to integrate modern technology with traditional farming to boost rural incomes.

Addressing a gathering of industry leaders, startups and diplomats, the Chief Minister said the benefits of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and mechanisation must reach the last mile for the state to achieve holistic growth.

"Just as Bengaluru is the capital of Information Technology, it must now become the capital of Agri-Technology," Siddaramaiah said.

He noted the state's push to make farming profitable for small landholders, adding that the government has disbursed Rs 70,000 crore in agricultural loans to over 83 lakh farmers.

He also spoke of the relaunch of the Krishi Bhagya scheme, designed to assist farmers in Karnataka's rain-fed and dry-land regions.

Keynote speaker Vijay Nirani, Founder and Managing Director of TruAlt Bioenergy, stressed the need for a shift from primary to secondary agriculture. He noted that while agriculture's contribution to India's GDP has declined over the decades, the sector remains the bedrock of the economy.

"Farmers should not just be producers of food; they must become producers of energy," Nirani said, pointing to the potential of ethanol and bio-CNG. He added that Karnataka is a leader in ethanol production, helping reduce the nation's reliance on crude oil imports.

A representative from the Israeli Consulate shared insights into how Israel transformed its arid landscape through drip irrigation and precision farming, reaffirming a commitment to sharing knowledge through centres of excellence across India.

FKCCI President Uma Reddy noted that this is the first time the chamber has brought industry and agriculture onto a single platform.

"The future of agriculture cannot be shaped in silos. It requires a synergy between local wisdom and global innovation," she said.

The three-day summit features an exhibition of organic farming techniques and modern machinery, including e-tractors, drones and food processing technologies.

Agriculture Minister N Chaluvaraya Swamy, UAS Bengaluru Vice-Chancellor SV Suresha and KAPPEC MD CN Shiva Prakash were also present.

Govt plans counselling for engg courses before NEET results

BENGALURU, DHNS: Higher Education Minister Dr M C Sudhakar on Friday said that the government is planning to conduct the seat allotment process for engineering courses without waiting for the results of the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET).

Speaking to reporters after visiting a KCET examination centre, he said, "We are examining the possibilities of conducting counselling for engineering courses instead of waiting for the NEET results. This will help the students to get engineering seats at the college of their choice."

Meanwhile, sources in the Karnataka Examination Authority (KEA) said that the delay in announcement of NEET results is delaying the entire counselling process of engineering courses.

"Conducting seat allotment for engineering courses before the NEET results will help us to complete the counselling for engineering courses early and it will be helpful even for students who wish only to opt for engineering courses," an official said.

KEA to collect skill lab fee

The minister said that KEA would collect even the skill lab fees, fixed for private engineering colleges where they are allowed to collect up to Rs 20,000, from this year.

"The government had allowed colleges to collect skill lab fees up to Rs 20,000 following the recommendations of former vice-chancellor Karisiddappa. But there are complaints against the college for demanding excessive fees. So, from this year, the skill lab fee will be collected by KEA along with the fees," he said.

Khandre asks dept to focus on removing encroachments

Eshwar Khandre

BENGALURU, DHNS: Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre on Friday directed officials of the department to take up necessary steps to evict encroachments and utilise technology to get better results from the ground.

At an event at Aranya Bhavan here, the minister told officials to utilise the 'E-Gastu', a mobile-based application developed to track the patrolling work done by frontline staffers, and deploy other instruments that can check forest and wildlife crimes.

He said removing encroachments was a difficult job. "Steps are needed to be taken to evict encroachments that have taken place post 2015. We need to strengthen the legal cell as well as the vigilance wing of the department in this regard," he added.

Khandre said felling of trees, poaching, encroachment, man-animal conflicts are among the major challenges faced by the department. He asked officials to ensure no life is lost in the efforts made for conservation.

Meanwhile, the department on Friday inducted three four-wheelers and 10 bikes into the elephant task force in Hassan. The vehicles were purchased through corporate social responsibility funds provided by the National Highways Authority of India.

DKS meets Kharge amid leadership tussle

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Amid continuing internal power tussle in the Karnataka Congress unit, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar met Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge here on Friday and is understood to have raised the issue of change of leadership in the state.

Shivakumar

Shivakumar was accompanied by his brother and former MP D K Suresh. The closed-door meeting lasted over 40 minutes, though the exact details of the discussions have not been made public.

The visit comes against the backdrop of a long-standing demand from the Shivakumar camp for a rotational chief ministership.

The Vokkaliga leader arrived in the national capital on Thursday and notably skipped a key Cabinet meeting in Bengaluru, which was held to finalise internal quota among Scheduled Caste communities on Friday.

Speaking to the media on Thursday he described his Delhi visit as "not for leisure" and said he had come to discuss state politics with senior Congress leaders. He, however, refused to disclose his conversations with the party's high command.

Sources indicate that Shivakumar pressed Kharge to implement the reported assurance on rotational leadership once the government completes its mid-term.

Though Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi is likely to invite Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar to Delhi mid next month, mostly after five state assembly polls, to resolve leadership issue, Shivakumar is learnt to be pressurising the party top brass to convene meeting at the earliest, source said.

FLASH IN THE SKY

A lightning streak across the night sky during a thunderstorm near Moorusavir Mutt in Hubballi on Friday. PTI

Proposal for relocation of Indian gaurs awaiting govt nod

VIJAYAKUMAR S K
CHIKKAMAGALURU, DHNS

A proposed plan to capture and relocate Indian gaurs similar to elephant relocation efforts has remained pending for over a year due to lack of government approval, officials said.

Human–wildlife conflict involving wild elephants and Indian gaurs has been increasing across the district. Over the past three years, six people have lost their lives and several others have been injured in such incidents. Areas including Kalasa, Koppa, Mudigere, and Sringeri have reported frequent movement of Indian gaurs near human settlements.

Officials had earlier visited the Kanha Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh to study the relocation of Indian gaurs to the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, where the population of the species had significantly declined. The last Indian gaur in Bandhavgarh reportedly died in 1998. To restore the population, authorities began relocating Indian gaurs from Kanha Tiger Reserve, located about 250 km away, in 2011. According to officials who participated in the study visit, more than 170 Indian gaurs are now present in Bandhavgarh National Park.

Six people have lost their lives and several injured in the human-animal conflicts involving Indian gaurs in the last three years in Koppa, Sringeri, Kalasa and Mudigere taluks. A team of forest officials recently visited Kanha Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh to study relocation of Indian gaurs. DH FILE PHOTO

In Karnataka, authorities have already implemented relocation measures for elephants. Officials said that once government approves the proposal, the funds will be granted. A team of experts will prepare standard operating procedures (SOPs) and provide necessary training to field staff.

Local residents have urged authorities to expedite the process.

Indian gaurs frequently straying into villages would first be identified and tranquilised. They would then be transported in specially designed trucks to designated forest locations. Officials explained that the captured animals cannot be released immediately into a new forest. Instead, they must be kept in a controlled enclosure for a few days to acclimatise to the new environment before being released into the wild.

Forest Minister Eshwar B Khandre said officials had already visited Madhya Pradesh to study relocation of Indian Gaur. "The proposal is still under discussion, and steps will be taken on this shortly," he stated.

Two on morning walk injured in wild jumbo attack

HAMPAPURA (MYSURU DISTRICT), DHNS: Two people on a morning walk, had a narrow escape from a wild jumbo and ended up with injuries, at Hampapura village in HD Kote taluk of Mysuru district, on Friday.

Siddegowda of Hampapura and Marilinga of Madduru village, Mysuru taluk, are the injured.

It is said that the duo had gone for a morning walk as usual, when a wild jumbo suddenly came on the road from the nearby field. As soon as they saw the jumbo, they started running, but slipped and fell down. The jumbo attacked them with its trunk. Following their screams, the jumbo ran out from the spot.

Range Forest Officer Ravikumar and staff rushed to the spot and shifted the duo to a private hospital in Mysuru for treatment.

Ravikumar said, "Two people suffered minor injuries in the wild jumbo attack. As both are senior citizens, they are weak. They have been admitted to the hospital and are recovering. The jumbo might have come from the Saragur forest area. The department personnel are observing the movements of the jumbo. If necessary, an operation to rescue the jumbo will be launched".

REMEMBERING MATINEE IDOL

Fans, family pay emotional tribute to 'Annavru' on 97th birth anniversary

BENGALURU, DHNS

A sea of ardent fans, and the sounds of iconic Kannada melodies filled the air at the Kanteerava Studio premises on Friday, as the state celebrated the 97th birth anniversary of the legendary matinee idol Dr Rajkumar.

The Department of Information and Public Relations organised a formal ceremony at Dr Rajkumar Punyabhoomi, where family members, politicians and Sandalwood celebrities gathered to pay homage to the legend. Fans from across the state travelled to the city to pay their respects at the memorial, which was decorated with flowers.

Dr Rajkumar's son Raghavendra Rajkumar and his wife performed a special pua at the memorial. Speaking to the media, family members and close associates recalled the simplicity that defined the superstar despite his towering fame. "His popularity grew, but his simplicity grew faster," noted a fan Raju. "Whether it was a major event or a small gathering, he was always seen in his trademark white shirt and dhoti. He wasn't just an actor, he was the soul of Karnataka."

Music director and actor Sadhu Kokila highlighting Dr Rajkumar's immense contribution to both cinema and social causes said, "He was a master of Carnatic, Hindustani and even Ghazals. I witnessed him record 'Manikyaveena' a complex Raga Malika featuring nine different ragas in a single take. His technical knowledge was so sharp he could pinpoint a single wrong note in a 3,000-member hall."

Actor-producer Raghavendra Rajkumar pays floral tributes at Dr Rajkumar memorial during the 97th birth anniversary of his father-thespian Dr Rajkumar, on Kanteerava Studio premises in Bengaluru on Friday. MLA Gopalaiah is also seen. DH PHOT/B K JANARDHAN

A large number of fans visit Dr Rajkumar's memorial. DH PHOTO

Kokila lamented the current state of the Kannada film industry, stating, "Today, we feel like orphans. We have lost our leader, our father figure, and our guide. There will never be another like him." The event highlighted how Dr Rajkumar's films - 'Gandhada Gudi' and 'Bangarada Manushya' were instrumental in promoting forest conservation and inspiring youth to return to agriculture, respectively. His pivotal role in the Gokak Movement was also recalled as a defining moment for the Kannada language.

The Punyabhoomi remained crowded throughout the day, with fans of all ages braving the heat. For many, the memorial has become a temple rather than a resting place. "Even if the world ends, the legacy of Rajkumar and Puneeth Rajkumar will remain rooted in this soil," said a long-time fan. "He taught us how to live, how to love our language, and how to respect every human being, no matter how small."

K'taka to expand DigiLocker project for rural SC/ST people

Over 28k citizens can access documents online

BENGALURU, DHNS

In a pilot project across two gram panchayats, the government has enabled over 28,000 citizens belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC/ST) to access a dozen key documents via DigiLocker, with plans to scale it up statewide.

DigiLocker is a federal government-run, Aadhaar-based online platform allowing citizens to store their digital documents, negating the need for physical copies.

In 2024-25, the government announced the 'Nanna Gurutu' (My Identity) project to issue key documents to SC/ST citizens in 1,000 gram panchayats of the Kalyana Karnataka region. It was piloted in the gram panchayats of Huskur (Bengaluru Urban) and Biligiriranganabetta (Chamarajanagar).

The government decided to issue 13 documents and services via DigiLocker: Aadhaar, birth/death certificate, caste and income certificate, ration card, voter ID, a personal bank account, social security pension, Ayushman Bharat ID, health insurance, labour cards, ID for the physically-challenged, Bhagya Lakshmi enrolment and MGNREGA job card.

Based on a door-to-door survey, the government identified 35,795 SC/ST citizens in the two gram panchayats - 18,246 in Huskur and 17,549 in Biligiriranganabetta.

According to Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR) Minister Priyank Kharge, 32,152 SC/ST beneficiaries in Huskur and Biligiriranganabetta have been issued documents physically. A total of 28,983 of them now have documents on DigiLocker -- 14,885 in Huskur and 14,098 in Biligiriranganabetta. The remaining beneficiaries have yet to receive physical and digital copies.

"Chief executive officers of all zilla panchayats have been directed to implement the 'Nanna Gurutu' project across the state," Priyank said.

Further, the department has prepared a proposal - *Nanna Gurutu: Innovation in strengthening Gram Panchayat Governance and Service Delivery* - seeking Rs 55 crore from the Union government under the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan.

Karnataka has an estimated 2.75 crore DigiLocker users. There are 225 issuers of documents in the state, which include government departments and educational institutions. There are 512 requesters, which include several private companies that use DigiLocker to ascertain the authenticity of documents submitted by job aspirants.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds posts best-ever Akshaya Tritiya sales

Record sales for Akshaya Tritiya

- **53** per cent year-on-year growth till date
- Over **1.25** lakh customers, **Rs 2,646** crores revenue generated across India and international markets
- Studded jewellery growth at **45** per cent
- Rising share of first-time customers
- Integrated manufacturing delivering price advantage and design variety played a major role in growth

Malabar Gold & Diamonds, a leading jewellery retailer and a brand synonymous with responsibility and trust, has delivered its strongest-ever Akshaya Tritiya performance, driven by robust demand, superior customer engagement and the company's integrated manufacturing strengths.

The company recorded 53 per cent year-on-year growth till date globally during Akshaya Tritiya, with overall sales reaching Rs 2,646 crores, including 71 per cent growth in India and 22 per cent growth across international markets, reflecting sustained momentum across geographies.

M P Ahammad, Chairman, Malabar Group, said, "Akshaya Tritiya continues to be a significant occasion for our customers, and this year's performance reflects both the strength of demand and the depth of customer engagement. What stands out is not just the strong growth, but its quality. At the core of this growth is the trust customers place in us as a responsible jeweller. Our commitment to transparent pricing, ethically-sourced gold and diamonds, stringent quality standards and customer-first approach continue to resonate strongly. It is this focus that enabled us to build deeper relationships with customers and drive sustained preference across markets"

The brand had over 1.25 lakh customers walking in on Akshaya Tritiya across markets, supported by a healthy mix of wedding purchases and increasing participation from young and first-time buyers. Notably, the studded jewellery category recorded 45 per cent growth, highlighting a clear shift towards design-led and value-added products.

The growth outpaced broader market trends, supported by the company's manufacturing-led advantage. Its integrated model enables the delivery of design at competitive prices while maintaining consistent quality at scale.

Curated by DH Brandspot

NGT forms committee to check overexploitation of groundwater

BENGALURU, DHNS: Having taken cognisance of the failure of states and Union Territories (UTs) to prevent illegal extraction of groundwater and to ensure groundwater aquifers are recharged, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has constituted a committee to evaluate groundwater management and recommend corrective measures.

In its order dated April 23, 2026, the principal bench of the tribunal led by Justice Prakash Shrivastava and expert members A Senthil Vel and Afroz Ahmad reviewed the summary submitted by the Central Groundwater Authority (CGWA) on the action taken by states and UTs

The CGWA, which looed at the number of groundwater level assessment units, drew attention to overexploitation. The data in the report pointed out that 1.33% of the assessed units were overexploited in Andhra Pradesh, while the number was 75% in Punjab. With 18% of the assessed units found to be overexploited, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu (34%) found themselves in the intermediate group.

Many states and UTs, including those regulated by CGWA, did not report the extent of exploitation. Similarly, not much detail was available with regard to action taken by the authorities in exploited zones.

The findings of the report emphasise the need for states and UTs to take corrective action, noted the NGT bench. Despite the Ministry of Jal Shakti laying down guidelines for regulation of groundwater extraction in September 20, and issuing the standard operating procedure (SOP) for implementation of the guidelines in May 2023, the bench noted that no effective steps had been taken to prevent overexploitation.

"We deem it proper to form a committee comprising the representatives of National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI), Geological Survey of India (GSI), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, an expert from IIT Roorkee and representative from CGWA," it said.

The committee is mandated to examine the reports submitted by the states and UTs, assess lapses in implementation of the central guidelines, consider relevant material and make recommendations to check overexploitation and to recharge groundwater, within the next three months.

SC ends protracted dispute between Raghavendra Swamy & Uttaradi mutts

Settled by efforts of ex-SC judge Sanjay Kishan Kaul

NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court has brought the curtains down on a protracted legal battle between Sri Raghavendra Swamy Mutt and Sri Uttaradi Mutt over conducting puja and other rituals at Nava Brundavana Gaddi in Koppal district of Karnataka.

A bench of Justices M M Sundresh and N Kotiswar Singh took on record submissions by senior advocate D S Naidu and advocate Aljo K Joseph for the parties that the matter has been settled by the efforts of former Supreme Court judge Sanjay Kishan Kaul, who was appointed as mediator on March 19, 2025, to resolve the dispute.

"We have been informed that after great efforts made by the mediator, the matter has been successfully resolved between the parties," the bench said.

'Settlement agreement'

The counsel for both parties submitted that the special leave petitions may be disposed of in light of the settlement agreement of January 03, 2026 and the memorandum of understanding of April 13, 2026.

"The settlement agreement and the memorandum of understanding executed between the petitioner and respondent number 5, shall form a part and parcel of this order. We place on record the efforts taken by the mediator," the bench said in its order on April 20, 2026.

The matter before the apex court arose out of a challenge to the Karnataka High Court's division bench judgment of December 20, 2024, by Sri Uttaradi Mutt.

The High Court had then allowed a writ appeal filed by Sri Raghavendra Swamy Mutt and others and set aside the single judge bench judgment, which directed the Karnataka government to provide adequate protection if and when necessary for Shri Uttaradi Mutt to offer prayers, conduct pooja, Aaradhana, Mahimotsava, Puja, rituals, Ashtottara, Samarpana etc in the name of Shri Raghuvarya Teertha Brundavana.

The single judge had also directed the state authorities to ensure that Shri Raghavendra Swamy Mutt and/or its followers do not offer any prayers or rituals in the name of Shri Jaya Teertha at any Brundavana situated at Nava Brundavana Gaddi, subject to the judgment and decree, if any, passed in the original suit pending in this respect before a court at Gangavathi.

Cabinet okays 15% SC internal reservation

Cabinet, from Page 1

"This is a historic decision. Today it was discussed for 5 to 10 minutes and unanimously decided," says H C Mahadevappa

"Based on this, the government enacted a law with a 6:6:5 formula, which received the Governor's assent. However, confusion over roster points and litigation by the Alemari community led to a high court stay as the SC/ST reservation rose to 24% (17% for SC, 7% for ST) leading to total reservation of 56%, breaching the cap," the CM explained.

He added that a special Cabinet meeting slated for March 27 was postponed due to the election model code of conduct.

A technical committee headed by the Chief Secretary later examined options.

"The court has ruled 50%. So, the SC reservation will be 15% (and ST 3%). Proportionately, we have reduced sub-quota to 15% (from the earlier 17%). After the final court ruling, the additional 6% will be decided. All 56,432 posts announced in the budget will be filled under the internal reservation framework immediately. Our government is committed to giving 17% to SC and 7% to ST. If the high court rules favourably, the additional 6% will be treated as backlog," the chief minister clarified.

"The revised formula also provides 20% reservation within Group C for Alemari castes. Our party's stand is 'sarvarigu samapaalu' (equal share to all) and social justice. Though delayed, this is a historic decision," Siddaramaiah said.

Social Welfare Minister Dr H C Mahadevappa said, "This is a historic decision. Today it was discussed for 5 to 10 minutes and unanimously decided.

This reflects the party's stand and the government's commitment. It got delayed due to roster points... Some people instigated and created confusion. Roster points will be fixed for 15 %. If the SC reserved posts (vacancies) are below 15, there will be no internal quota but open to all SC," he added.

Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara said, "Haryana, Punjab, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh have similar models. Karnataka's case is unique as it has 101 SC communities, with many small communities who feel deprived. Today, we have ensured justice for all. Every fifth post in Group C will be reserved for Alemaris. The Karnataka model may be emulated as we have shown how to implement it legally, politically and administratively."

Parameshwara added that internal reservation was part of the Congress 2023 manifesto and the government was fulfilling it now. "In 2013, our party had made 165 poll promises and fulfilled 158."

Food & Civil Supplies Minister K H Muniyappa said Siddaramaiah had "entered pages of history".

"This is a 40-year struggle. The CM and the party have kept their word. We had unanimously taken a decision at Chitradurga and today all 101 marginalised communities got justice. It has ended the conflict between SC Left and SC Right."

Backward Classes Minister Shivaraj Tangadagi said, "No one should be denied justice. The new formula is historic as we have convinced all communities. There was apprehension about the Group C roster... now all Group A, B and C posts will be filled."

7 of AAP's 10 Rajya Sabha MPs jump to BJP

AAP, From Page 1

The 'Operation Lotus', as the defection was described by Sanjay Singh, is seen as the BJP's attempt to offset the political damage it suffered last week when the government failed to muster enough votes in the Lower House for the passage of a Constitution Amendment Bill for delimitation and implementation of women's quota.

Chadha attributed his defection to the AAP "straying" from its principles. "The AAP that I nurtured with my blood and sweat and to which I gave 15 years of my youth has completely strayed from its principles, values and core morals... In Rajya Sabha, the AAP has 10 MPs. More than two-thirds of them are with us in this initiative. They have already signed, and this morning we submitted all the required documentation, including signed letters and other formal paperwork, to the Chairman."

Hitting out at the AAP, Chadha said the party is no longer working for the country but for its own benefit. "Over the past few years, I have increasingly felt that I am the right person in the wrong party. Today, I announce my decision to move away from AAP and work more closely with the 'janata' (public)," he said.

Pathak said that he had never thought that this situation would arise but it has and "for 10 years, I remained associated with this party. Today, I am parting ways with the AAP".

Incidentally, Mittal, who was appointed the AAP deputy leader in the House only on April 2 after Chadha was removed from the post, left the party, nine days after a raid by the ED at his business entities as part of a FEMA probe.

Sanjay Singh said he will be submitting a letter to Rajya Sabha Chairman CP Radhakrishnan demanding that Chadha, Mittal and Pathak, who addressed a press conference to announce the development, be disqualified from the Rajya Sabha, as this "tantamount to voluntarily relinquishing membership" of their party under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution.

Six of the seven defectors, barring Maliwal who got the ticket from Delhi, were elected to the Upper House from poll-bound Punjab, and the AAP called it a "betrayal" of Punjabis.

Kejriwal said the "BJP has once again betrayed Punjabis" while Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann called the seven MPs "gaddars (traitors)" and Sanjay Singh warned that Punjabis will "never forgive" them.

With this, the BJP's strength rose to 113 in the House, just ten short of majority on its own, while the NDA's strength has risen to 148, including seven nominated MPs. Over 30 Rajya Sabha seats are set to go for polls later this year and the BJP is likely to gain an extra five seats, bringing it closer to the two-thirds mark of 163.

Tension was simmering in the AAP since its Delhi defeat in 2025 February and its MPs were said to be restless, prompting the BJP to make the move. Chadha's ouster as deputy leader accelerated 'Operation Lotus' and six more MPs, including Maliwal who has been a lone ranger for sometime after her falling out with Kejriwal, were roped in so that disqualification proceedings will not be initiated.

It has also led to speculation about the stability of the Mann-led AAP government in Punjab with less than a year left for the Assembly election, amid BJP trying to find a foothold in the Sikh dominated border state.

Punjab Congress leaders said AAP MLAs in the state will also defect, with state party chief Amarinder Singh Raja Warring claiming that 50 of the 92 AAP MLAs may also defect.

◆ WEATHER ◆

Overview: Dry weather prevailed over Coastal Karnataka, South Interior Karnataka and North Interior Karnataka

Forecast April 25: Dry weather likely to prevail over the state.

INTERIOR NORTH			
Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Belagavi	37.4	22.6	1.8
Bidar	41	25.5	00
Vijayapura	39	21	6.2
Dharwad	38.4	20.8	5.2
Haveri	38	21.4	00
Kalaburagi	41.3	20.7	24.4
Raichur	40.4	25.4	00
COASTAL			
Honnavar	34.2	25.8	00
Karwar	36.6	25.4	00
Shirali	NA	NA	NA
Mangaluru	34.3	27.5	00

INTERIOR SOUTH			
Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Agumbe	34.1	22.3	00
Bengaluru	36.4	24.6	00
Ballari	NA	NA	NA
Chamarajanagar	NA	NA	NA
Chikkamagaluru	NA	NA	NA
Chitradurga	38.8	23.5	00
Davangere	38.2	22	00
Hassan	NA	NA	00
Mysuru	37.2	22	00
Madikeri	NA	NA	NA
Kolar	36.8	19.4	00
OTHER STATIONS			
New Delhi	41.7	24.5	00
Kolkata	38.7	28.2	00
Mumbai	35.9	26.1	00
Chennai	37.5	27.8	00
Pune	40.2	23.4	0.4
Hyderabad	39.7	26	0.1
Th'puram	35.5	26.5	14

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SAD DEMISE

Smt. C. Rajamani
With profound grief, we share the demise of our loving mother Smt. C. Rajamani at her residence on 24.04.2026. She will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered.
Cremation on 25th April 2026, 3 pm at Kallahalli Crematorium
Contact: 9900052098, 9844038706

SAD DEMISE

We regret to inform the sad demise of
Sri G. Vijayakumar (GVK), Advocate
Ex-General Secretary of the Advocates Association, Bangalore, and Ex-President of Domlur Club, on 24th April 2026.
The cremation will take place on 25th April 2026 at 4:00 PM at The Kudlu Crematorium, Bengaluru.
We pray for the departed soul to rest in peace and extend our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.
wife Smt. V. Bharthi, Daughter and Son-In-Law, Son and Daughter-In-Law, Granddaughters, Friends and Family Members
GVK Associates, Advocates & Consultants, No.64, Ground Floor, 4th Cross, Indiranagar 2nd Stage, Bengaluru - 560 038

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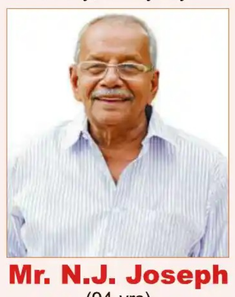
Vaikunta samaradhane on 26-4-2026 Sunday, from 11-30am onwards at our residence. You are requested to attend the above ceremony and pray for the departed soul.
In loving memory
Family members

"If we are children again, we want no one else but You, for our Dad. We love you Pa, today, everyday".



Mr. N.J. Joseph
(94 yrs)
With profound grief we announce the peaceful passing on of our Father & Grandfather on 21.04.2026.
Funeral Mass: Sunday, 26th April, 2026 At: Our Lady of Fathima Church, Jalahalli, Bangalore-13, Time: 1:30 p.m.
Burial: Church Cemetery, Abbigere, Bangalore-560015
Josy, Jojan, Felix, Remy, Ria, Ray & Rayona

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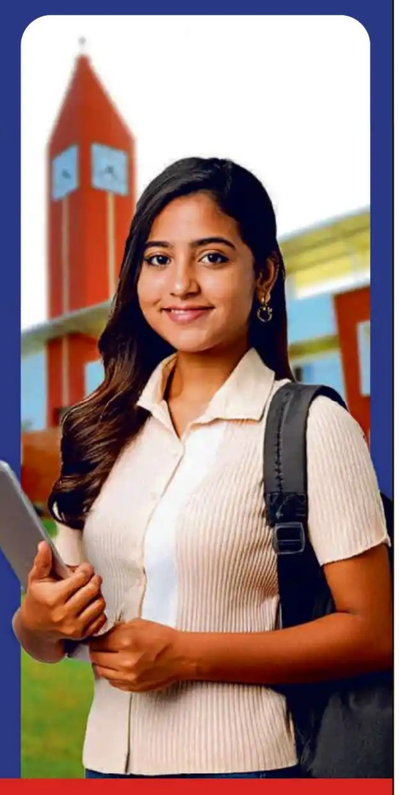
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PERSONAL

Change of Name

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **ABEL JOHN MATHEW** alias **MATHEW ABEL JOHN** R/at No. 4, 2nd Floor, Bless Thopil, 3rd Cross, Opp. Dhanlaxmi Bakery , Horamavu, Bengaluru-560043 declare that all the above names belong to me only. Henceforth I shall be called & known as **ABEL JOHN MATHEW,** vide affidavit dated: 23.04.2026 before notary M Rajendra, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **S.SANDEEP** S/o Saravanan, residing at No.113, Geddalahalli, K.Narayanapura Cross, Bangalore – 560077, have changed my name to **B.S.SANDEEP CHETTY** vide affidavit dated 13-08-2025 sworn before notary Uday Kumar K, Bengaluru. Henceforth I shall be called as **B.S.SANDEEP CHETTY** only.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **KUMARA KADAM** residing at No.33, 4th Main, 4th Cross, Evergreen Street, Uday Nagar, Bengaluru North-560016, have changed my name to **KUMAR KADAM P** vide affidavit dated 24-04-2026 before notary C.V. Earappa, Bengaluru. Henceforth I shall be called **KUMAR KADAM P** only

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Gauhati HC denies anticipatory bail to Khera

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

In what may lead to further legal trouble for Congress leader Pawan Khera, the Gauhati High Court on Friday rejected his petition seeking anticipatory bail in connection with an FIR lodged by Riniki Bhuyan Sarma, the wife of the Assam Chief Minister.

The court's order came days after the Supreme Court paused a transit anticipatory bail granted to Khera by the Telangana High Court. The apex court's order was passed on April 15 after the Assam Police moved the Supreme Court against the Telangana High Court's bail order.

Rejecting Khera's anticipatory bail plea, Justice Parthivjyoti Saikia observed that, in an attempt to gain political mileage, Khera had dragged an innocent woman into the controversy. The court said Khera has not yet proved beyond doubt that Riniki possesses passports of three other countries or that she had set up a company and invested a huge amount of money.

While referring to Khera's claim that his associates had collected the documents based on which he made the allegations against Bhuyan Sarma, Justice Parthivjyoti Saikia in his order said the custodial interrogation of Khera is necessary to find out who are the associates and how and from where they had collected the documents.

"The court is of the opinion that under the given circumstances, this case cannot be termed as a defamation simpliciter. There are materials for a prima facie case under Section 339 of the BNS, 2023 (possession of fake documents) and the petitioner has been avoiding police investigation."

Appearing for Khera, Abhishek Manu Singhvi argued that the Congress leader's remarks were political rhetoric aimed at the opposition party ahead of the elections and could, at most, amount to defamation.

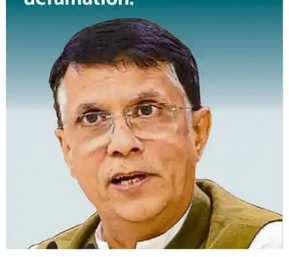
Riniki filed a case after Khera alleged that she possessed multiple passports and had properties abroad.

Passport row

The court's order came days after the SC paused a transit anticipatory bail granted to Khera

The court observed that in an attempt to gain political mileage, Khera had dragged an innocent woman into the row.

Appearing for Khera, Abhishek Manu Singhvi argued that the Congress leader's remarks were political rhetoric and could, at most, amount to defamation.



SC for urgent hearing of deleted WB voters

Aggrieved persons have liberty to approach Calcutta HC chief justice

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Friday asked the appellate tribunals to give out-of-turn hearing to those who make out a case of it against deletion from voter lists after the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of rolls in West Bengal.

A bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi also asked the persons excluded from the voter lists to approach the court-appointed 19 appellate tribunals for redressal of pending issues, including the deletion of names from the voters' list.

The bench asked the appellate tribunals to give an out-of-turn hearing to those who make out a case of urgent hearing for addition in voter lists.

On the issue of exclusion or inclusion in the voter lists, it also granted the liberty to aggrieved persons to approach the Calcutta High Court chief justice on the administrative and judicial side for redressal of grievances.

"Most issues have been comprehensively answered by our April 13 order. However, we can understand that some issues would keep on arising on a day-to-day basis, warranting the attention of the High Court Chief Justice or the Appellate Tribunal. Liberty is given to approach the Chief Justice on the administrative side for redressal of pending issues," it said.

At the beginning of the hearing, the bench expressed happiness over the high voter turnout in the first phase of the West Bengal Assembly poll held on Thursday, as the state registered a record voter turnout of 92.72%. "As a citizen of India, I was very happy to see the voting percentage. When people exercise the right to vote, this strengthens the democratic set-up," the CJI said.

The court was hearing a batch of petitions, including the one filed by Mamata Banerjee, related to the SIR exercise. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta also hailed the high voter turnout, besides commending the role of central forces in ensuring peaceful elections.

Court call

Those who make out a case of urgent hearing for addition in voter lists can have out-of-turn hearing

The Supreme Court was hearing a batch of petitions, including the one filed by Mamata Banerjee

SC EXPRESSED HAPPINESS OVER THE HIGH VOTER TURNOUT IN PHASE 1 OF WEST BENGAL POLLING

Top court nod to NIA chargesheet in gherao case

The Supreme Court on Friday allowed the NIA to file its chargesheet on completion of investigation in the sensational incident of April 1, 2026, in West Bengal, in which seven judicial officers, engaged in Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls, were illegally confined by a mob in Malda district, reports DHNS.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi was told by Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, appearing for the NIA, that a fresh status report was filed by the probe agency giving details of the probe carried so far.

Taking note of the submission, the bench said, "The NIA will be at liberty to file a chargesheet in a court of competent jurisdiction."

Over 2,400 Indians evacuated from Iran, says govt

Over 12 lakh return from the Gulf region; lone sailor in Iranian custody safe

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Central government on Friday said more than 2,400 Indians had been safely evacuated and brought home from Iran, and that the situation in the conflict-hit country remained serious.

"There is a ceasefire for now. Despite this, our Ambassador continues to work in the Embassy in Tehran and is providing assistance to people. Through their efforts, we have safely evacuated 2,400 Indian citizens from there since February 28," Union Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal told reporters here.

Iran's airspace is partially open for cargo and chartered flights amid the West Asia conflict. "Our embassy in Tehran continues to facilitate the movement of Indian nationals through Armenia and Azerbaijan for onward travel to India," said Jaiswal.

MEA Additional Secretary (Gulf) Aseem R Mahajan said over 12 lakh people had returned to India from the Gulf region. He further highlighted that regular flights continue to operate from several countries to various Indian destinations.

"Airlines continue to operate limited commercial flights based on operational and safety considerations between the UAE and India. Today, around 110 flights are expected to operate," he said.

"Flights are operating from airports in Saudi Arabia and Oman to different destinations in India. Qatar's airspace is partially open. Qatar Airways is operating flights to various destinations in India."

The government also said that the lone Indian seafarer aboard a vessel currently in Iranian custody was safe. On April 22, Iran captured two container ships — MSC Francesca and Epaminondas — while a third vessel, Euphoria, was fired upon.

The Liberian-flagged container ship Epaminondas, which was signalling Mundra port in Gujarat as its next destination, had this Indian seafarer among its 21 crew members — mostly Ukrainians and Filipinos.

"All Indian seafarers in the Gulf region are safe," Ministry of Ports, Shipping, & Waterways Director Mandeep Singh Randhawa told reporters here.

In all, 13 Indian-flagged vessels and one Indian-owned ship remain stranded, he said.

Oppn's fresh notice in RS for removal of CEC

NEW DELHI, PTI: Opposition parties on Friday submitted a fresh notice in the Rajya Sabha seeking to move a motion for the removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, sources said.

The fresh charges on Kumar's "proved misbehaviour" include "continued partisan asymmetry in the enforcement of Model Code of Conduct", including the poll panel's failure to act on complaints against Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "address to the nation" on April 18.

Gyanesh Kumar

According to sources, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh and TMC leader Sagarika Ghose submitted the notice to the RS secretary general.

Nine specific charges

"In the Rajya Sabha, 73 opposition MPs have just submitted a new notice of motion to their Secretary General to present an addressed resolution to the President of India, urging the removal from office of the Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar," Ramesh said on X.

The Congress leader said that there are now nine specific charges against the CEC, which have been recorded in "extreme detail" and which cannot be "denied or suppressed".

Thrissur firework unit licensee succumbs to burns, toll at 15

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS: One more person injured in the Thrissur fireworks unit explosion died on Friday.

The licensee of the fireworks unit Satheesan succumbed to the burns.

With this, the death toll reached 15 even as the identity of several bodies were yet to be confirmed.

Body parts were recovered even from distant locations on Friday, and the search for the missing persons is on. Condition of three more persons under treatment continues to be critical.

The recovered body parts will be identified through DNA tests, police said.

An estimated 38 people were working at the unit at the time of the incident.

Following the accident, Thiruvambadi Devaswom and Paramekkavu Devaswom, the two temples associated with Thrissur Pooram, have decided to scale down the celebrations, while rituals will proceed as usual.

Bihar's 1st BJP CM wins trust vote

ABHAY KUMAR
PATNA

Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary on Friday cemented his grip further on the BJP's state unit as well as the government by winning a motion of confidence by voice vote in the Assembly, barely nine days after being sworn in to the post.

Samrat, the first CM from the BJP in Bihar, had a verbal duel with Leader of the Opposition Tejashwi Yadav during the debate on the confidence motion during a special one-day session of the Assembly.

Samrat Choudhary-led Cabinet members pose for a photo after winning the vote of confidence in Patna on Friday. PTI

Launching an attack on the treasury benches, Tejashwi said Choudhary might not have needed to move a confidence vote on Friday had the BJP declared its own CM face during the Assembly polls.

"You gave the slogan '2025 to 2030, phir se Nitish', but finished Nitish within weeks of winning the poll after projecting him as the CM face. We always maintained that the BJP would backstab Nitish after using him in the polls," said Tejashwi, Nitish Kumar.

"It is strange that Bihar is seeing its fifth government in as many years," added the RJD leader. "An elected CM has been replaced by a selected CM," said Tejashwi.

Replying to Tejashwi's charge that the BJP could not find someone from its own ranks to become the CM, and instead chose a turncoat — who started his career with the RJD — for the post, Samrat said: "Even Lalu Prasad became the CM for the first time in March 1990 when the BJP's 33 MLAs supported him in the Assembly after a fractured mandate."

TOWERING SHOW

Gurjeet Singh Khalsa greets his family members after ending his 560-day protest and climbing down from a 400-foot BSNL tower, in Samana, Punjab, on Friday. Khalsa (43) climbed atop the tower in October 2024, demanding stringent punishment for the sacrilege of the Guru Granth Sahib. He was brought down with the help of a specialised crane-lift, a fire official in Patiala said. PTI

India's peak power demand hits 240 GW due to intense heat

NEW DELHI, DHNS

With rising temperatures in many parts of the country, India's peak power demand surged to a seasonal high of 240 GW on Thursday.

This is the highest level so far in the summer season, says officials of the Power Ministry.

According to data from the Ministry of Power, the country's peak power demand met (the highest supply in a day) was recorded a tad higher at 240.12 GW on April 23, up from 239.70 GW on April 22, the highest during this summer.

Though the record high of 250 GW of peak power demand was recorded in May 2024, a similar trend may be witnessed this year too, as several states are already witnessing a heat wave, says officials.

Increased consumption is also driven by the usage of air conditioners and agricultural consumption. The surge indicated that an early onset of heat stress in key regions, particularly in northern and western India, where temperatures have already begun breaching seasonal averages.

Last year, the peak power demand was 242.77 GW, which was recorded in June, 2025. In the first fortnight of this month, the peak power demand remained lower than the 235.32 GW recorded in April last year.

Heatwave conditions

The power ministry officials said the demand and consumption of electricity will increase further as the Indian Meteorological Department has predicted heatwave conditions over major parts of northwest, central and eastern India till this weekend.

The power ministry has estimated the peak power demand of about 270 GW during the summer season this year.

NCB alerts Indians visiting Maldives on new drug laws

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has cautioned Indians planning a visit to the Maldives to remain extremely vigilant about their belongings as the island country has strengthened its anti-drug laws, including harsh punishments like the death penalty in extreme cases.

"Be aware that ignorance of the law is not a defence and any legal violations may result in severe punishments," the federal anti-narcotics agency said on Thursday.

The advisory comes after the Maldives recently "strengthened" its anti-narcotics laws by amending the Maldives' Drugs Act, effective March 2026.

NCB said the amendments prescribe significantly enhanced penalties for drug-related offences, including life imprisonment and, in certain cases involving large-scale trafficking, the death penalty, subject to confirmation by a competent court under Maldivian laws.

The amended law provides stricter punishment even for possessing small quantities of prohibited substances, the bureau said.

UP ATS arrests two for Pak gangster, ISI links

LUCKNOW, DHNS: The Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) of the Uttar Pradesh Police has arrested two youths from Noida for their suspected links with Pakistani gangsters and that country's spy agency Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

According to the police sources here, the two were nabbed from Noida on Thursday. The cops identified them as Tushar Chauhan, alias Hizbullah Ali Khan, a resident of Meerut, and Sameer Khan, a resident of Delhi.

They had allegedly been assigned the task of setting up a network of terrorists in western UP as well as targeting religious leaders. One pistol, some cartridges, and a knife were recovered from their possession.

The sources said Tushar and Sameer were in contact with Pakistani gangsters Shahzad Bhatti and Abid through some encrypted channels.

'Forced to wear skull cap, offer Namaz': Fresh plea in TCS case

NASHIK, PTI: Four accused arrested in the sexual harassment and forcible conversion case at the TCS unit here allegedly forced a 35-year-old male colleague to wear a Muslim religious cap and perform Namaz, police told a court on Friday while seeking their custody.

The magistrate's court remanded Tausif Attar (36), Danish Sheikh (32), Shahrukh Qureshi (34) and Raza Rafiq Memon (35) in fresh police custody till April 29 in the case.

The accused, who were in judicial custody, were arrested afresh by police on April 23 and produced before the court on Friday in the case registered at Mumbainaka police station based on a complaint filed by the male colleague who works as a senior analyst.

Sheikh and the other three accused were booked under relevant provisions of the BNS for outraging religious feelings and criminal intimidation.

During the hearing, prosecutors Kiran Bendbhar and Aniket Avhad sought their custody for ten days, citing the seriousness of the matter.

As per the complainant, the accused used to target his religious beliefs and make derogatory comments about Hindu deities. On one occasion, they forced him to wear a Muslim skull cap and perform Namaz, and the video was shared on a WhatsApp group of employees. They were also forced to consume non-vegetarian food as part of a conversion attempt, the police told the court.

Further, the accused allegedly made obscene remarks about Hindu women, the complainant's wife and the couple's inability to have children, the remand application said.

NASHIK TROUBLE

- Magistrate remands 4 accused to fresh police custody till April 29
- Accused booked for outraging religious feelings, criminal intimidation
- Complainant alleged accused used to target his religious beliefs

CBI may probe T'gana irrigation scam

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

The Telangana government has decided to press the CBI to commence its long-delayed investigation into the alleged Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project scam.

The move comes after the Telangana High Court on Wednesday granted significant relief to BRS supremo and former chief minister K Chandrashekar Rao and his nephew, former irrigation minister T Harish Rao, ruling that no action shall be taken against them based on the Justice P C Ghose Commission report because its findings were prejudicial to the petitioners.

Deliberating on the verdict at a Cabinet meeting on Thursday evening, ministers noted that the HC had faulted neither the appointment of the commission nor the report it submitted, and upheld the panel's formation as both lawful and constitutional.

The court's objection was confined to a purely technical ground that notices had not been issued to the petitioners, and its ruling was limited to staying any action against them based on the report's findings.

Legal experts reportedly told the Cabinet that the HC verdict posed no obstacle to the CBI proceeding with its investigation.

The regime had issued a government order nine months ago seeking a CBI probe into the irregularities and lapses surrounding the Kaleshwaram project. The investigation has not commenced yet.

Against this backdrop, the Cabinet resolved to formally request CBI once again to expedite the inquiry. It also decided to study the full text of the HC verdict and consult senior legal experts in Delhi.

Driver dies after self-immolation as Telangana strike continues

HYDERABAD, DHNS: A Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) driver died on Friday from severe burns, a day after setting himself on fire in the Warangal district's Narsampet.

Senior driver Kola Shankar Goud, one of thousands of RTC workers who joined an indefinite strike since midnight on April 22, succumbed despite emergency medical intervention.

His death triggered outrage among RTC workers, who intensified their protest against the state government. The strike, which began after talks between unions and the government broke down, has brought bus services across Telangana to a standstill.

RTC unions have 32 demands, chief among them being the TSRTC's merger with the state government, salary hikes, pay revision, clearance of pending dues — including provident fund and other benefits, regularisation of contract staff, filling of vacant posts, better work conditions, and welfare measures.

RSS leader rejects Hindu supremacism charges

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale, speaking during a visit to the United States, dismissed charges of Hindu supremacism against the saffron outfit, contending that Hindu philosophy was rooted in the principle of universal oneness.

He said Hindus had historically neither invaded nor subjugated other nations, and therefore "have nothing to apologise for".

Hewas speaking at an event at the conservative think-tank Hudson Institute in the American capital city of Washington DC.

"Hindu philosophy and culture are not always supremacist... We see the oneness in everybody, be it a living or non-living thing. When that is the basic philosophy of Hindus, the supremacist nature of Hindus cannot exist. In history, Hindus have never invaded any country or enslaved any people. Hindus have nothing to apologise for," he said.

Dattatreya Hosabale

Hosabale described the RSS as a "people's voluntary movement" inspired by the civilisational and cultural values of ancient India. He said the RSS conducts assemblies to build character, self-confidence, and a sense of community service among its volunteers.

Pushing back against what he said was a narrative built "knowingly or unknowingly, or as part of an agenda", he also said that American perceptions of India were misplaced, and that his country was far more than its stereotyped image.

6 detained in J&K over student stir

SRINAGAR, DHNS: The Jammu and Kashmir Police have detained six individuals under the J&K Public Safety Act for their alleged involvement in vandalism and instigating unrest during a recent student protest in Sopore in the Baramulla district.

The preventive detention law allows authorities to detain individuals without trial for up to two years to maintain public order and security.

A police spokesperson said the miscreants were actively involved in instigating unrest, vandalism and attempting to disturb peace. "Their activities posed a serious threat to public order and safety," a statement said.

The protest had erupted over a case that had been registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, based on allegations that a lecturer had molested a Class 9 female student.

DECCAN HERALD
ESTABLISHED 1948

Dead end: Malegaon's missing truth

With the Bombay High Court discharging four persons accused in the Malegaon blasts of 2006, the case has ended without a closure, denying justice to the families of the victims and truth to the nation. The multiple blasts killed 31 people and injured over 300. The case was investigated by three different agencies – the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS), the CBI, and the NIA – and was marked by a series of turns. While the ATS, which initially conducted the investigation, named nine Muslim men as the accused, and the CBI concurred with the squad's findings, the probe by the NIA led to Hindu right-wing extremists. A division bench of the Bombay High Court cited insufficient evidence while discharging the accused.

The court quashed a special court order framing charges against the four accused, and said the judge had not "applied his mind" to the case. It also said the NIA "completely ignored" the ATS probe and chargesheet in the case. In July 2025, a special NIA court acquitted former BJP MP Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur, then Lt Col Prasad Purohit, and others in a case related to the September 2008 blast near a mosque in Malegaon, which killed six people and injured over 100. In that case, the court said that "suspicion does not constitute proof." It noted that the testimonies of the witnesses were not credible, and evidence connecting the accused to the blast was missing. The court did not accept evidence in the form of recorded telephone conversations. Even in the 2006 case, the court maintained that the case was built on weak circumstantial evidence, including retracted statements, leading to what it called a dead end.

The Bombay HC's discharge of the accused raises questions about the probe and prosecution

Cases involving terrorism are politically sensitive, and when left unsolved, they trigger suspicion and multiple theories about the motives. This uncertainty is even more prominent in a case involving the loss of 31 lives and investigated by multiple premier agencies, all to end without a conclusion on who the conspirators were. There is no clarity on what led to this outcome – inept investigation, prosecution failures, or the flawed manner in which the courts appreciated the presented evidence. A verdict without a closure has been delivered, making a two-decade-long wait for justice even more tragic. Notably, no convictions were given in other terror-linked cases, such as the 2002 Akshardham attack and the 2006 Mumbai train bombings. These are striking failures and a grim reflection of the State's response to terrorism, which remains a serious threat to society.

Tourist safety cannot be an afterthought

The alleged sexual assault of an American tourist at a homestay in Kodagu is more than a shocking crime; it is a stark warning that the district's booming tourism economy is outstripping its ability to guarantee basic safety. Coming barely a year after the horrific incident in Hampi, where an Israeli national was gang raped, this recurrence points to systemic gaps rather than isolated failures. A solo traveller on a repeat visit to a homestay in Kutta was allegedly drugged and assaulted by a staff member from Jharkhand. The owner, instead of reporting the incident immediately, allegedly kept her in illegal confinement and cut the WiFi connection. It was only after the victim reached Mysuru and contacted the US Embassy that the machinery of justice moved. The state acted swiftly once alerted, arresting the accused and the homestay owner, and cancelling the property's licence.

This situation presents a genuine dilemma. Regions like Kodagu face acute labour shortages, necessitating reliance on migrant workers. While police mandate background verification, small homestay owners often lack the resources for rigorous vetting, relying instead on Aadhaar cards – a system far from foolproof. However, logistical hurdles cannot serve as an alibi for regulatory failure. By definition, a homestay is a lived-in, family-run establishment. Increasingly, absentee owners have converted properties into *de facto* resorts staffed by hired workers, stripping away the model's built-in social accountability. Properties that do not adhere to these norms should lose their homestay tag and be treated as commercial establishments, subject to stricter licensing and compliance.

The Kodagu incident is another warning note, warranting stricter oversight on homestays in Karnataka

The proliferation of illegal properties across the Western Ghats compounds the crisis. Thousands remain invisible to oversight. Such illegality cannot flourish without official connivance. The Tourism Department's episodic crackdowns suggest a reactive rather than preventive approach. Reports that some establishments are becoming hubs for illegal activity point to collusion or gross inefficiency among local officials. The government must crack the whip and set its house in order. Tourists, too, should exercise due diligence: verify registrations through official portals rather than relying on social media. Solo travellers should avoid isolated locations with poor connectivity, keep family informed of their movements, and remember that 112 is the universal emergency helpline. However, the burden must not shift onto visitors; safety is a fundamental expectation. The Kutta and Hampi incidents have gained global attention, tarnishing Karnataka's reputation as a safe tourism destination. The state must move beyond *ad hoc* measures and ensure rigorous, proactive enforcement, building a credible framework that prevents such crimes.

A QUIETER MISSION

ISRO to AI: A playbook for sovereign capability

Building home-grown AI will take pace, talent, and institutional patience. Does India have the long game?

BINOD KUMAR, KANADPRIYA BASU AND SUBHO MAJUMDAR

On September 24, 2014, a group of scientists in Bengaluru erupted in joy. Their spacecraft Mangalyaan, built in just 15 months on a budget smaller than the Hollywood film Gravity, just slipped into orbit around Mars. India had become the first country to enter Mars' orbit on its first attempt. The Mangalyaan mission cost $74 million. NASA's Mars mission cost $671 million. The gap was not just about money; it was about mindset. Build it yourself. Make it work. Don't wait for someone else to hand it to you. That philosophy is what made ISRO one of the great institutional success stories of the modern era.

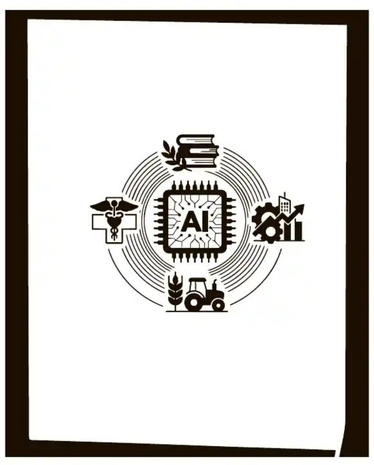
Now, a new organisation is betting that this approach can work for artificial intelligence (AI). IAIRO, the Indian AI Research Organisation, launched in January 2026, is India's first government-backed AI research body, built on a public-private partnership model, with a five-year budget of roughly Rs 300 crore. The mandate is clear: build India's own AI capability from the ground up and create the technology itself. IAIRO's own founders make the ISRO comparison. It's a flattering analogy. But how much of it holds up?

Vikram Sarabhai founded ISRO in 1969. He had a simple but radical belief: a poor country can still afford a space programme, but that programme must solve the problems of its poor people. Early satellites, launched via rockets carried to launchpads on bicycles and bullock carts, beamed educational television to rural villages. There were no shortcuts, because there was no money for shortcuts. This is the first lesson of the ISRO story. Frugal engineering is not about being cheap. It's about building for the actual problem when you cannot afford to waste anything.

The second lesson is institutional patience. The first successful launch of an Indian satellite, Rohini, came in 1980, after multiple failed launches and iterations over 11 years. No startup under ordinary circumstances would have survived this long. ISRO needed the backing of a State willing to play the long game, and the government came through.

The third lesson is strategic self-reliance. ISRO chose to build ground up because dependence on another country for critical infrastructure is a risk you never stop paying for. India witnessed this happening with semiconductors and 5G. It is now happening with AI.

But this is where the analogy starts to strain. ISRO could afford patience because space itself moved slowly. Rockets are expensive and take years to design. Launches are expensive, and failures can set you back for years, but being a



decade behind the Americans or the Soviets was not fatal. Progress in AI is much faster. It moves in months, sometimes weeks. What is cutting-edge today is a footnote by next quarter. A San Francisco lab can go from idea to global product in under a year. So IAIRO does not have 11 years to find its footing.

The second problem is that of openness. Rocketry thrives on secrecy. A new propulsion system is a national asset and a secret. AI works the opposite way. The biggest AI breakthroughs occurred because researchers shared their data, code, and models freely for the community to build on. An IAIRO that seals itself off from this in the name of sovereignty may end up with irrelevance.

Then there is the talent problem, which is arguably harder to solve. ISRO kept its engineers through an incentive that money cannot easily replicate: the feeling that you are doing something that has never been done before, for a country that is watching. That worked well enough. AI researchers have a different calculus. A sharp AI scientist graduating from IIT or IISc today is choosing between IAIRO and a role at Google or Anthropic, with a salary paid in dollars and stocks that could make them financially independent before they turn forty. Prestige and patriotism alone will not close that gap.

What success would look like

As IAIRO grows, there will be pressure to measure its success the way we measure ISRO's, through landmark moments and breakthroughs. That would be the wrong approach. ISRO's wins are photogenic, like a visible rocket launch or satellite deployment. But AI is critical infrastructure itself. Its benefits surface in applications, like in a doctor's diagnostic screen, in a crop disease alert on a farmer's phone, or in a government form that someone can finally read and fill out in their own language.

In India, hundreds of millions of people live their lives in languages that today's AI systems handle badly, or ignore altogether. A language model that actually works for a farmer in Odisha or a small trader in Tamil Nadu will never trend on social media. It won't look like a moon-landing. But it would reach more people, and matter more to them, than almost anything else IAIRO could build.

This is the form that institutional patience has to take for AI. Done right, it will be two decades of quiet, unglamorous capability-building that empowers hospitals, agricultural bodies, schools, and state governments in Viksit Bharat 2047. That would include sharing data, training developers, and building tools that quietly serve people who will never think about who built them.

The real question is whether India's institutions have the patience for that. Political pressure is real. Budget cycles are short. There will always be a flashier problem to chase, a bigger announcement to make, and a headline to make that justifies the funding. Holding course through all of that for two decades, without a moon landing to show for it, is a different kind of hard. It may be the hardest thing IAIRO has to do.

That answer, like the organisation itself, is still being written.

(Binod is an IAS officer serving as Additional Chief Secretary [School and Higher Education], Government of West Bengal, Kanadpriya is an AI leader and business faculty at George Mason University, USA, and Subho is an assistant professor of Decision Sciences at IIMB)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

The thrill of the first flight

Taxiing back, I felt like a warrior returning victorious from battle

COL H P SINGH

The examiner's thumbs-up meant the world to me; I had been cleared to fly solo. At a time when I wasn't even fully adept at driving a car, mastering a piston-engine aircraft and enduring the stern temper of instructors hadn't been easy. "516, (my call sign) booster on, take off" was my first-ever call as captain of the aircraft. With a silent prayer on my lips, I pushed the throttle forward; my 'air horse' began trotting. When it reached galloping speed, I pulled the joystick back and felt what the Wright brothers must have felt nearly a century ago; I was airborne.

Defying gravity and piloting all by myself, I felt empowered, as if destiny were in my hands. Weeks of perseverance had gone into taming this flying machine. Now, as it obeyed my every command, it was my confidence that had soared higher than the aeroplane. Rattling out well-rehearsed procedural checks, I kept a vigilant eye for force landing fields should an emergency arise. As I turned 'port' (left) while climbing, the majestic sweep of the Ganga flowing serenely beneath my wings was a blessing of sorts.

The winds were favourable, the sky crystal clear and the horizon more breathtaking than ever that morning. Levelling out, I glanced at the eagles, as though daring them in their instinctive mastery of flight. I felt the world lay beneath the dust of my boots. Overcome with emotion, I slipped off my oxygen mask and kissed the canopy. "516, downwind, ops normal." The thrill in my voice was unconcealed. "Good going, HP." My instructor was tracking every move through binoculars from the ATC.

Descending while turning towards the airfield, I aligned myself with the runway for the toughest leg of the sortie. '516, flaps down, reporting finals'; I commenced the approach for landing, repeating those four words: 'alignment', 'speed', 'perspective', and 'power'. Balancing these parameters had been the acid test throughout training, and today, with the instructor's seat beside me empty, there was no margin for error. While my rate of descent along the glide path was under control, my heartbeat wasn't.

Once over the 'dumbbells' (lines marked at the start of the runway), I gently rounded off, levelling the aircraft and easing the throttle back. The sudden drop in engine RPM filled the cockpit with an eerie silence as I surrendered myself back to gravity. All that remained now was to sink gracefully, maintaining wings level. Then came the inexpressible wow moment; both rear wheels kissed the tarmac, smooth and sure, followed moments later by the nose wheel. I shouted a resounding "Yes!" and let the plane roll on, savouring the moment, before finally applying the brakes.

Taxiing back to the dispersal, I felt like a warrior returning victorious from battle. Before my instructor could hug me, I offered a crisp salute, an instinctive gesture of pure gratitude. Since that day, I have flown hundreds of sorties, yet few have matched the exhilaration of my solo first flight. Each year, on World Pilots' Day—April 26—I relive that memory; this year, I chose to ink it down.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

With record turnout, voters uphold democratic values

The recently concluded Assembly elections in Tamil Nadu and the first phase in West Bengal witnessed an unprecedented voter turnout, marking a significant milestone in the history of Indian democracy. This remarkable participation stands as a true celebration of the strength and vitality of the world's largest democracy. On polling days, all political parties must rise above their differences and work collectively to preserve the dignity and sanctity of the electoral process. The presence of representatives from foreign countries to observe the electoral process highlights global recognition of India's democratic practices. Indeed, the voters have upheld the dignity and values of Indian democracy. It is hoped that this spirit of participation and integrity will continue to guide future elections.

Basavaraj N Akki, Dharwad

Partisan EC

The Election Commission's conduct, characterised by a blatant disregard for its constitutional responsibilities, is deeply concerning. While the ruling party and the prime minister blatantly violate the model code of conduct, the EC appears to be looking the other way. Conversely, the excessive zeal displayed by the EC in issuing notices to opposition leaders over the very same rules highlights a disturbing double standard. It is shameful that a body mandated under Article 324 of the Constitution to ensure impartial elections is reducing itself to a mere tool of a political party.

S Padmanabhan, Kochi

Encourage govt schools

Apropos 'With 93.97% pass, govt schools show they are second to none' (Apr 24), it is indeed a commendable achievement by the government schools, and warrants appreciation and encouragement. This accomplishment should spur the authorities concerned to sustain the momentum and strive for better learning outcomes. The state government should consider rewarding schools and teachers for their efforts, while also keeping them motivated to pursue excellence. With better infrastructure, government schools will surely attract higher enrolment and retention rates.

H V K Bhatta, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

Hindus realise this is the last chance to oust the 'Jamaat' government, or a Greater Bangladesh is inevitable.

Suvendu Adhikari, BJP leader

Fear is their favourite tactic as they try to divide and conquer.

John Avlon

TO BE PRECISE

IN PERSPECTIVE

The fourth branch is under strain

Independent institutions are not independent when their existence depends on executive control

VISHAL R CHORADIYA

Opposition parties have, once again, submitted a notice seeking a motion for the removal of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar. The development carries the familiar weight of a foregone conclusion. The numbers in Parliament make failure certain. And yet the motion matters – not for what it will achieve, but for what it reveals.

This is the second such motion against Kumar. The first sought his removal after the Election Commission of India (ECI)'s conduct during the 2024 general elections drew sustained criticism, particularly over its handling of complaints against the ruling party and its opaque responses to questions about electoral rolls. That motion was rejected at the admission stage by the Rajya Sabha Chairman and the Lok Sabha Speaker.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla was also the very official against whom the Opposition had filed a similar motion, citing his presiding over the systematic marginalisation of the Opposition by curtailing debate and converting Parliament into a chamber of ratification rather than deliberation. That motion was defeated.

Both officials sit at the heart of what legal scholars call the "fourth branch" of democracy – bodies outside the trinity of legislature, executive, and judiciary that serve as independent referees. India has built an impressive architecture of such institutions. The ECI oversees the world's largest democratic exercise. Information Commissioners under the Right to Information Act are supposed to hold the State accountable to its citizens.

The CBI and the ED are charged with investigating powerful interests without fear or favour. The National Human Rights Commission, the CAG, and the Lokpal are all, in theory, guardians of the public interest.

But the distance between theory and practice is where democracy quietly erodes.

The allegations underlying both unsuccessful motions were credible. Against the Speaker: Opposition MPs have been suspended in record numbers, Question Hour has been curtailed, crucial legislation has been passed without debate, and the chair has intervened not as a neutral arbiter but as a partisan actor. Against the CEC: the ECI's revision of electoral rolls across multiple states has raised concerns about the exclusion of lakhs of legitimate voters. The ECI's silence in the face of Model Code violations by senior leaders of the BJP, including the Prime Minister himself, has been conspicuous.

The reasonable expectation of enforcing the law has collapsed because of a structural problem the motions expose but cannot resolve. Both the CEC and the Lok Sabha Speaker owe their positions to the executive. The Lok Sabha elects the Speaker, meaning the ruling coalition installs its preferred candidate. The CEC, owing to recent legislative changes that removed the Chief Justice of India from the selection committee, is now chosen by a panel in which the government holds the decisive vote.

Motions to remove these officials require a majority in Parliament. But when brought by the Opposition, the outcome is predetermined.

The mirage of autonomy

The fourth branch cannot check the executive when the executive controls the conditions of its existence. The CBI and the ED have long been instruments of selective prosecution: the pattern of cases launched and dropped in alignment with political alliances has been documented exhaustively. The RTI regime is being throttled in slow motion. The institutional ecosystem of accountability has been hollowed out not through a single dramatic act but through accumulation: of appointments, procedural changes, and cultivated deference.

It is this accumulation that has contributed to multiple independent bodies reclassifying India from a "flawed democracy" to an "electoral autocracy". The label is contested by the government, but the criteria underlying the classification are not arbitrary: they measure the independence of institutions, the fairness of electoral conditions, and the treatment of civil society and the press. On each dimension, the trajectory is downward.

Constitutional scholars have argued that this degradation is structural – that majoritarian governance tends to consume the independent institutions that constrain it, because those institutions represent the counter-majoritarian logic at the core of constitutional democracy. A government with a confident majority has every incentive to prefer compliant institutions over independent ones.

Democracies do not lose their accountability overnight. They lose it when its failure becomes predictable, and its pursuit becomes symbolic. The Opposition's motions may have been destined to fail – but if that destiny goes unquestioned, then the deeper failure will belong to the idea that power in India can still be meaningfully checked at all.

(The writer is an assistant professor with the Department of Professional Studies, Christ University, Bengaluru)

EV push needs strategic course correction

A national transport strategy that integrates urban planning, energy transition, industrial policy and mobility behaviour is essential for India's EV push

SRINATH SRIDHARAN

India's electric vehicle transition is being framed as inevitable. Policy incentives, state-level ambition and rising adoption numbers suggest momentum is firmly on track.

Clean mobility cannot be reduced to rapid EV adoption. It must be anchored in four deeper pillars: secure supply chains, cleaner energy inputs, strong domestic industrial capability and a shift toward efficient mass transportation.

The most immediate vulnerability lies in supply chains. India is scaling EV adoption while remaining almost entirely dependent on imports for critical battery minerals and components. The global EV ecosystem is already witnessing resource nationalism, export controls and technology gatekeeping. In such a landscape, India risks replacing one form of dependence with another. Oil imports are diversified and globally traded. Battery minerals are geographically concentrated and politically sensitive.

Policy has begun responding through production-linked incentives (PLIs), mineral diplomacy and early investments in cell manufacturing. But there is still a tendency to equate assembly with capability. True resilience lies upstream, in refining, processing and materials science. Without that depth, India will remain a price-taker in a market it is otherwise helping to expand.

There is also a sequencing task that remains under-acknowledged. Adoption is being accelerated ahead of ecosystem readiness. Charging infrastructure is growing, but grid capacity and grid quality are uneven. More importantly, the electricity feeding this transition is still significantly coal-based. This is where the policy conversation needs to become more honest. EVs reduce urban pollution, which is a critical public health gain. But climate gains depend on the energy mix.

There is also a deeper conceptual gap in how clean mobility is being framed. If the objective is to reduce emissions at scale, the emphasis cannot remain disproportionately on individual vehicle ownership, even if those vehicles are electric. Public transport systems powered by clean energy — whether electric buses, metro rail or shared mobility networks — deliver far greater emissions reduction per unit of capital deployed. They also address congestion, land use and urban efficiency in ways private vehicles never can. A policy architecture that privileges individual EV adoption over mass transit risks solving for the visible while neglecting the structural. Clean mobility, at its core, is not about replacing every internal combustion engine with a battery. It is about moving more people with less energy.

India also underutilises alternatives that can materially shift both passenger and freight movement. Inland waterways, coastal shipping and rail-linked logistics corridors offer lower-emission pathways that remain peripheral in policy thinking. Equally, urban transport continues to suffer from poor integration, where metros, buses, and rail networks operate in silos rather than as a seamless system. Without better town planning and a genuinely multimodal design, mobility will remain fragmented, inefficient, and far more carbon-intensive than it needs to be.

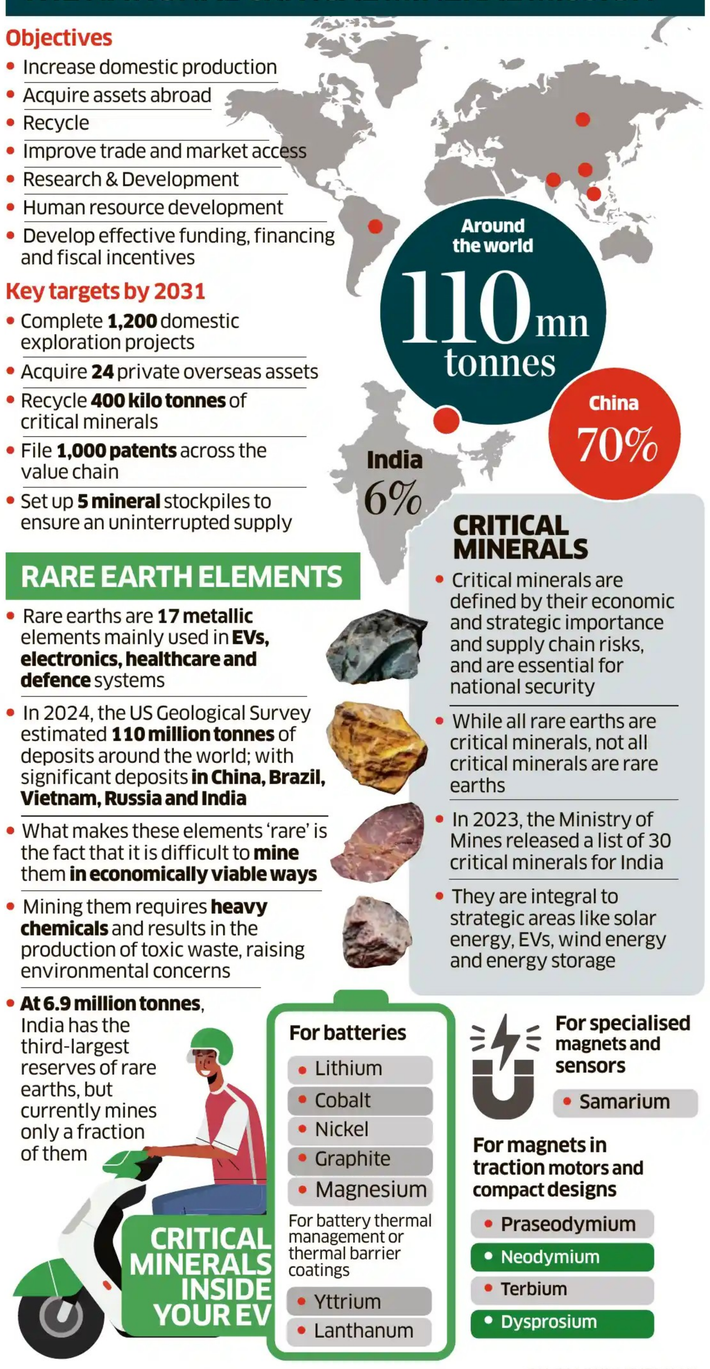
The same gap is visible in lifecycle thinking. Battery production is resource-intensive, and end-of-life management remains a weak link. Recycling frameworks are emerging but are not yet scaled, standardised or economically compelling.

The current policy architecture is heavily subsidy-driven on the demand side, with industrial policy still catching up. This creates a risk of mispriced adoption, where market signals are shaped more by incentives than by underlying efficiency or sustainability.

Clean mobility requires a decade of aligned investments across supply chains, grid infrastructure, manufacturing capacity and demand creation. Private capital will only commit at scale when there is visibility of stable policy, predictable demand and viable unit economics. The current approach signals intent, but it does not yet fully derisk long-term investment.

At present, India's EV push sits across various state policies and national policies and incentive frameworks, often moving at different speeds and with different objectives. A national transport strategy that integrates urban planning, energy transition, industrial policy and mobility behaviour is still missing. India's transport future will not be defined by a single technology. Urban mobility, freight, two-wheelers and long-haul transport have very different economics and energy requirements. Hybrids, biofuels, CNG, hydrogen and EVs will all have roles to play. Policy should enable this plurality rather than prematurely converge on one pathway.

(The author is a corporate adviser and independent director on corporate boards. X: @ssmumbai)


THE NATIONAL CRITICAL MINERAL MISSION
Objectives
Increase domestic production
Acquire assets abroad
Recycle
Improve trade and market access
Research & Development
Human resource development
Develop effective funding, financing and fiscal incentives
Key targets by 2031
Complete 1,200 domestic exploration projects
Acquire 24 private overseas assets
Recycle 400 kilo tonnes of critical minerals
File 1,000 patents across the value chain
Set up 5 mineral stockpiles to ensure an uninterrupted supply
Around the world
110 mn tonnes
China 70%
India 6%
RARE EARTH ELEMENTS
Rare earths are 17 metallic elements mainly used in EVs, electronics, healthcare and defence systems
In 2024, the US Geological Survey estimated 110 million tonnes of deposits around the world; with significant deposits in China, Brazil, Vietnam, Russia and India
What makes these elements 'rare' is the fact that it is difficult to mine them in economically viable ways
Mining them requires heavy chemicals and results in the production of toxic waste, raising environmental concerns
CRITICAL MINERALS
Critical minerals are defined by their economic and strategic importance and supply chain risks, and are essential for national security
While all rare earths are critical minerals, not all critical minerals are rare earths
In 2023, the Ministry of Mines released a list of 30 critical minerals for India
They are integral to strategic areas like solar energy, EVs, wind energy and energy storage
At 6.9 million tonnes, India has the third-largest reserves of rare earths, but currently mines only a fraction of them
CRITICAL MINERALS INSIDE YOUR EV
For batteries
Lithium
Cobalt
Nickel
Graphite
Magnesium
For battery thermal management or thermal barrier coatings
Yttrium
Lanthanum
For specialised magnets and sensors
Samarium
For magnets in traction motors and compact designs
Praseodymium
Neodymium
Terbium
Dysprosium

DH GRAPHIC: SURESH N

Reframe policies to serve public

D DHANURAJ AND NISSY SOLOMON

Two recent developments in electric mobility have caught the attention of policymakers and the public alike. They diverge significantly in both substance and design. Delhi's draft EV Policy 2026 proposes subsidies of up to Rs 10,000 per kWh for electric two-wheelers, fixed incentives for electric auto-rickshaws, and a 100% waiver on road tax and registration fees for EV cars priced below Rs 30 lakh, while shifting from direct purchase subsidies to scrappage-linked incentives. In contrast, Karnataka has withdrawn tax exemptions for EV four-wheelers through the Karnataka Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Act, 2026, signalling a review of fiscal concessions for EVs.

Both cases illustrate the broader debate over intent versus outcome in public policy design and serve as strong examples for classroom teaching in public policy education.

Past central schemes, such as FAME (which ended in March 2024), subsidised personal EVs but raised questions about their utility for the larger public good. Roughly 16.16 lakh vehicles received incentives, yet the per-kWh incentives meant higher-range personal EVs received larger subsidies, disproportionately benefiting affluent households. Subsequently, the Union government replaced FAME with the PM E-Drive scheme, eliminating direct purchase subsidies for personal four-wheelers.

Since then, state EV policies have become the most important factor for buyers. Road tax waivers in Maharashtra, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu (saving up to Rs 1.5 lakh per car) and registration fee waivers across most states exemplify how public funds have been directed toward individual vehicle owners rather than public mobility.

While intended to reduce pollution, these incentives have notable flaws. Linking subsidies to battery capacity means that a 90-kWh luxury SUV receives far more taxpayer-funded support than a 20-kWh electric scooter, despite serving fewer mobility needs. Moreover, India's coal-heavy grid offsets much of the climate benefit, reducing the net impact on emissions.

More fundamentally, they raise equity concerns: the cost is spread among the public, but the benefits accrue disproportionately to a small, affluent segment. Most citizens rely on buses, shared autos or walking, yet continue to pay fuel cesses and road taxes that finance charging infrastructure for vehicles they may never own.

Scrappage incentives risk similar distortions. Replacing diesel cars with EVs does not reduce traffic congestion; it merely replaces a brown traffic jam with a green one.

Bengaluru's EV transition exemplifies that while EV registrations surged 1,275% between 2020 and 2024, this expansion only greened private mobility. The Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation continues to operate around 6,800 buses, well below the 13,000 required for adequate service, highlighting a shortfall in public transport.

Delhi is now following a similar trajectory: the city needs nearly 14,000 buses to meet daily demand, but had only 5,835 by July 2025, down from 8,240 in early 2024, as CNG bus retirements outpaced new e-bus additions. The Economic Survey 2025-2026 notes that ridership fell 20% between 2019-2020 and 2024-2025 due to unreliable services, long wait times, and poor route rationalisation. Nearly 60% of trips in Delhi are under 4 km, yet inadequate short-distance options push commuters toward private vehicles. Though fewer than 15% of households in Delhi own cars, private vehicles dominate road space.

Without strengthening bus systems and last-mile connectivity, inefficiencies in urban mobility will persist. Shifting capital from subsidising private EV ownership to co-investing in e-bus fleets, depot electrification, and multimodal hubs that integrate buses and shared mobility corridors would yield greater mobility and equity gains. Reliable bus networks can cut travel time, costs, and exposure to congestion and pollution for those who do not own cars. The way forward requires a change of outlook: from subsidising vehicles to subsidising trips. The future of Indian mobility belongs to the commuters served by high-frequency electric buses and shared services. It is time our fiscal policies reflected that reality.

(D Dhanuraj is chairman, and Nissy Solomon is senior research associate at the Centre for Public Policy Research, Kochi)

SCIENCE & ENVIRONMENT

Decoding the Kalpakkam milestone

By achieving a self-sustaining reaction, the Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor paves the way for large-scale thorium use, writes Dennis C Joy

On April 6, 2026, India achieved a historic breakthrough when the indigenously built Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) at Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu, reached its first criticality. The milestone signifies India's official transition to the second stage of its nuclear energy programme, making it only the second country in the world, after Russia, to operate a commercial-scale fast-breeder reactor.

India's pursuit of nuclear energy was first formalised in 1954, when physicist Homi J Bhabha, often called the father of the Indian nuclear programme, presented a three-stage nuclear energy plan to secure the nation's long-term energy independence.

"The aim of the long-range atomic power programme in India must be to base the nuclear power generation as soon as possible on thorium rather than uranium", exclaimed Bhabha. The strategy was born of the reality that, while India possesses only about 1–2% of the world's uranium, it holds approximately 25% of global thorium reserves.

The first stage of this plan relies on Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs), which use natural uranium as fuel and deuterium oxide, commonly known as heavy water, as the coolant.

Natural uranium is a mixture of different isotopes of uranium, such as U-238, U-235, and U-234, which are the same chemical element with an equal number of protons but different numbers of neutrons in their atomic nucleus. This fuel is used to generate electricity while producing plutonium-239 as a vital byproduct.

India successfully developed a series of sequentially larger, indigenously designed reactors under the Indian PHWR (IPHWR) series, ranging from 220 MegaWatts to the more modern 700 MW designs. Currently, India's installed nuclear capacity stands at 8.78 Gigawatts, contributing roughly 3% of the national electricity mix.

Stage 2 of India's nuclear programme, which commenced in 2006, centres on the deployment of Fast Breeder Reactors (FBRs). Unlike conventional PHWR reactors, FBRs use a Mixed Oxide (MOX) fuel composed of plutonium-239, recovered from the reprocessing of spent fuel from Stage 1, and natural uranium. FBRs produce more Plutonium-239, and crucially, another isotope of uranium, U-233, as byproducts. U-233 is a fissile material that can readily sustain a nuclear fission chain reaction and forms the base fuel for stage-3 of our nuclear roadmap.

WHAT WE achieved
KALPAKKAM REACTOR REACHES CRITICALITY
Now it produces more fissile material than it consumes.
WHAT'S NEXT?
STAGE 2: FAST BREEDER REACTORS
Use plutonium from Stage 1
Generate more Pu-239 and produce U-233
STAGE 3: THORIUM BASED REACTORS
Use U-233 and thorium
Generate more U-233 for a sustainable fuel cycle
OPPORTUNITY
India holds 25% of thorium resources
CHALLENGES
Fast breeder reactors are complex and have a history of low operating efficiency worldwide
Use of liquid sodium as coolant poses risks of leaks, fires and requires advanced safety systems

Because FBRs consume the plutonium waste from Stage 1 and generate their own fuel, they require significantly less natural uranium to produce electricity than PHWRs. Furthermore, by using spent fuel as an input, FBRs also reduce the volume of nuclear waste that requires long-term geological disposal.

After 20 years of research and engineering, the Kalpakkam reactor finally reached criticality, meaning it produced more fissile material than it consumed. This sets the stage for India to enter the final stage of our nuclear programme.

The challenges

The third stage aims to deploy thorium-based reactors. These will consume the uranium-233 bred in the previous stage, along with our vast reserves of thorium as its fuel. The thorium reactors would also produce more U-233, which would be fed back into the reactor, further reducing uranium use.

The path to reaching stage-2, however, has been marked by technical challenges and financial hurdles, with the PFBR costing more than twice its original estimate and delayed by over a decade.

"India faced technological isolation after the Pokhran tests. Therefore, technologies such as fuel reprocessing, Mixed Oxide Fuel (MOX) fabrication, and sodium-cooling systems had to be developed indigenously. Each of these technologies is quite complex and has long gestation periods," remarks Suneet Singh, a professor at the Department of Energy Science and Engineering at the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay.

FBRs are also notoriously difficult to operate, with a troubled history worldwide due to inherent technical characteristics that often lead to low operating efficiency. One of the major hurdles has been the use of liquid sodium as the coolant for PFBRs.

"Liquid Sodium poses challenges due to its chemical reactivity with air and water, and activation into radioactive sodium-24," remarks Singh. "India's FBR addresses these risks through a pool-type design of thermal stability and intermediate sodium loop to isolate radioactive coolant, and double-wall steam generators," he adds.

Despite the costs, the long-term economic rationale remains strong, as the Department of Atomic Energy estimates that India's extractable thorium could power the country with 500 GWe for at least four centuries. To proceed to the third stage, India must now scale its stage-2 capacity to approximately 50 Gigawatts from the 500 Megawatts prototype. This threshold is necessary to build the required inventory of fissile U-233 for thorium-based reactors.

The priorities

According to Singh, "India's immediate priority is to start building a fleet of commercial FBRs and expanding reprocessing infrastructure. Progress towards stage 3 requires demonstration of Thorium utilisation in Advanced Heavy Water Reactors (AHWRs) and scaling the U-233 fuel cycle."

The government has accelerated this mission through the Nuclear Energy Mission, which allocates Rs 20,000 crore for developing new technologies. It also introduced the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Act of 2025, which allows for limited private participation.

This strategic progression is essential for India to meet its net-zero emissions commitment, while insulating its fast-growing economy from the volatility of global fossil fuel markets.

While other nations, including the United States, France, the United Kingdom, Japan, China, and Russia, have pursued FBR technology, Russia was the only country to operate a commercial-scale facility until India's recent milestone. The widespread implementation of FBRs has historically been hindered by technical challenges and the unfavourable economics of pursuing the technology.

However, if India successfully transitions its prototype at Kalpakkam into a viable commercial energy model, it could serve as a global catalyst, encouraging other nations to reconsider and adopt similar technologies.

"If India succeeds, then it could change the perception about fast breeder technology. This technology can then play an important role in decarbonization and fuel sustainability strategies," concludes Singh.

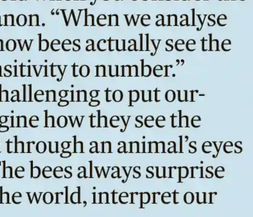
(The author is a science communicator associated with Research Matters)

DID YOU KNOW?

Honeybees pass their math test

New research led by Monash University has now addressed the recent international debate over whether bees are truly assessing numbers or simply reacting to visual patterns. The verdict: honeybees can process numerical information.

The study highlights the necessity of designing cognitive experiments that align with an animal's specific sensory and biological constraints.



When stimuli are evaluated from a bee's-eye view, the evidence for numerical cognition is strengthened rather than diminished.

The study, published recently in *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, re-examined previous critiques of bee intelligence by accounting for the honeybee's unique sensory and perceptual constraints. By evaluating experimental stimuli from a biologically relevant perspective, researchers demonstrated that previous criticisms, which suggested that bees were merely sensitive to visual cues such as spatial frequency, do not hold up.

Monash University Senior Lecturer Dr Scarlett Howard, from the Monash School of Biological Sciences, said the findings underscore the importance of avoiding human-centric biases in animal research.

"We must put the animal's perspective first when assessing their cognition, or we may under- or overestimate their abilities," said Dr Howard. "We see and experience the world quite differently from animals, so we must be careful of centring human perspectives and senses when studying animal intelligence."

The research team argues that to accurately assess cognitive abilities, experiments must be designed to match the natural sensory capacities of the subject species.

Dr Mirko Zanon, from the Centre for Mind Brain Sciences at the University of Trento and first author on the study, said that ignoring how an animal perceives the world risks leading scientists to the wrong conclusions.

"There has been a debate about whether bees are really 'counting' or just reacting to visual patterns. Our results show that this criticism doesn't hold when you consider the biology of the animal," said Dr Zanon. "When we analyse the stimuli in a way that reflects how bees actually see the world, what remains is actual sensitivity to number."

Dr Howard added, "It can be challenging to put ourselves in the mind of a bee to imagine how they see the world, but trying to see the world through an animal's eyes is an essential part of our work. The bees always surprise us with how they move through the world, interpret our questions, and make decisions."

PHYS.ORG

SC cites reproductive autonomy, allows minor girl to abort

'No court could force a woman, especially a minor, to carry a pregnancy against her will'

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Friday said a pregnant woman's choice was relevant, and that a woman's reproductive autonomy must be accorded the highest importance.

The top court allowed a 15-year-old girl to medically terminate her over seven-month pregnancy, saying that no court could force a woman—especially a minor—to carry a pregnancy against her will.

A bench of Justices B V Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan also noted that continuing the unwanted pregnancy was not in the minor's best interests, particularly since she had attempted to end her life on two occasions.

The bench said constitutional courts must weigh the circumstances of the case concerning the welfare of the pregnant woman rather than the welfare of the unborn child.

The bench said denying relief would compel the minor to endure irreversible consequences. It also emphasised that such an approach would be contrary to the constitutional and settled principles that recognised reproductive choice as a fundamental right.

The bench underscored that continuation of such a pregnancy could have long-lasting repercussions on the minor's mental health, educational prospects, social standing, and overall development.

The court said the right to make decisions concerning one's body, particularly in matters of reproduction, was an integral facet of personal liberty and privacy under Article 21 of the Constitution.

The bench said that the right could not be rendered ineffective by imposing unreasonable restrictions, especially in cases involving minors and unwanted pregnancies.

It also said that it was easy to suggest that if the pregnant woman was not interested in raising the child, she might give the child up for adoption, and, therefore, she must give birth to the child. "That cannot be a consideration, particularly in cases where the child to be born is unwanted. In such a situation, directing the pregnant woman to give birth to the child against her wishes and, therefore, continue her pregnancy would negate the welfare of the pregnant woman and make it subordinate to the child yet to be born," the bench said.

The court did not agree with a suggestion by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that terminating the pregnancy might harm the minor. It directed AIIMS Delhi to carry out the termination of pregnancy with the necessary safeguards.

SIT to probe Ghaziabad child rape-murder case

NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Friday directed the Uttar Pradesh Director General of Police to set up a special investigation team (SIT) to probe the case of a four-year-old girl who was allegedly raped and killed in Ghaziabad last month.

A bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi was hearing a plea filed by the victim's father seeking a court-monitored probe into the case, either by an SIT or the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the police, submitted that a charge sheet has already been filed in the case.

She said the trial has also commenced.

Dissatisfied with probe

The court, however, noted that the victim's parents were dissatisfied with the probe conducted by the Ghaziabad police.

The bench said the SIT should be notified preferably on Friday or by 11 AM on Saturday. It must consist of women police officers and be headed by an officer of the rank of commissioner or inspector general.

The bench added that the SIT will examine all the grievances raised by the victim's parents and also investigate the role of two private hospitals that allegedly denied treatment to the victim.

It made it clear that the SIT will file its supplementary report before the concerned trial court within two weeks.

The bench asked the trial court to keep the ongoing proceedings in the case in abeyance until then.

On April 13, the court flagged the "reluctance" of the Ghaziabad police in lodging an FIR and conducting an investigation into the case.

Top court declines to hear Indrani Mukerjea's travel plea

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Supreme Court on Friday refused to consider a fresh plea filed by Indrani Mukerjea, accused of killing her daughter Sheena Bora, seeking permission to travel abroad.

Senior advocate Mahesh Jethmalani, representing Mukerjea, submitted before a bench of Justices M M Sundresh and N Kotiswar Singh that last year, the top court had not decided her plea to travel abroad on merit, but there is now some urgency.

The bench said the court had already asked her to move the trial court, where proceedings against her are pending, for any relief.

It added that last year's order was intended only to enable the petitioner to file an application before the trial court, rather than the apex court.

The court granted the petitioner liberty to file an application before the trial court, which, if filed, would be decided in accordance with its order.

The bench added that, considering the urgency, the application may be disposed of within four weeks.

Last year, the apex court had dismissed a plea by Mukerjea, a former media executive, to travel abroad, observing that there was no guarantee she would return.

The apex court had directed the trial court to conduct the proceedings within a year and upheld a Bombay High Court order refusing her plea.

Don't get married if unable to maintain family: Allahabad HC

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

The Allahabad High Court has said a man cannot refuse to take care of his wife during the course of a trial on the ground that his income is not enough.

A division bench comprising Justices Atul Sreedharan and Vivek Saran recently made the observation while dismissing an appeal by an individual challenging the order of the Prayagraj Family Court that directed him to pay Rs 4,000 per month as maintenance during the course of the trial.

"Those who feel that they cannot maintain a wife and children if the marriage goes sour, ought not to get married in the first place at all, but having done so, they cannot fall back on their poor financial condition to escape the responsibility of maintaining their wives during the course of the trial," the High Court bench said.

"Having considered the reasonings given in the impugned order and the quantum of maintenance that has been imposed upon the appellant by the trial court, this Court is of the considered opinion that keeping in view the cost of living today, it cannot be said that the amount is in excess and not affordable for the appellant," it added.

The court also refused to accept the appellant's argument that he was a mere labourer.

The appeal was filed by the appellant against order of the Family Court, Prayagraj, in an application under Section 24 of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, filed by the respondent-wife for maintenance *pendente lite*.

MISCELLANY

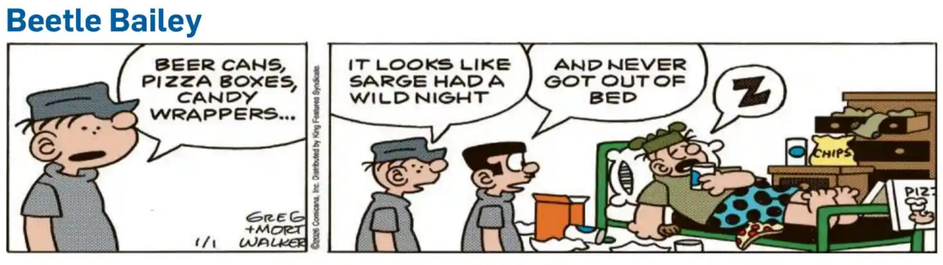
◆COMICS◆

Blondie

SWEETHEART, LOOK! THE BALANCE ON THIS CREDIT CARD IS FINALLY ZERO!
THAT'S A BEAUTIFUL THING, ISN'T IT, HONEY?
WHY DON'T WE CELEBRATE BY CUTTING UP THAT CREDIT CARD?
IDEAS LIKE THAT WILL NEVER STIMULATE THE ECONOMY, HONEY!

Hagar The Horrible

Beetle Bailey



Peanuts

Marvin

I KNOW THAT YOU'RE UPSET THAT YOU DON'T HAVE YOUR LITTLE BUNNY
BUT THINK OF HOW NICE IT WILL BE WHEN YOU SEE FLOPPET TOMORROW!
THINK OF HOW NICE IT WILL BE TO GET SOME SLEEP TOMORROW NIGHT AFTER I DON'T LET YOU GET ANY TONIGHT

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

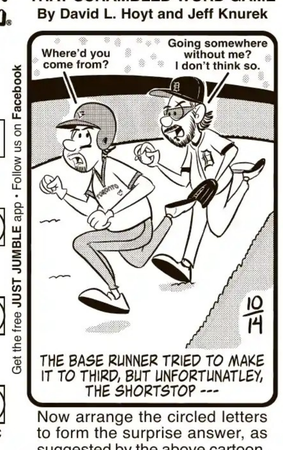
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

GUGEO

HIGET

IDNALS

LOLGBA


Where'd you come from?
Going somewhere without me? I don't think so.
10/14
THE BASE RUNNER TRIED TO MAKE IT TO THIRD, BUT UNFORTUNATLEY, THE SHORTSTOP ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Facebook

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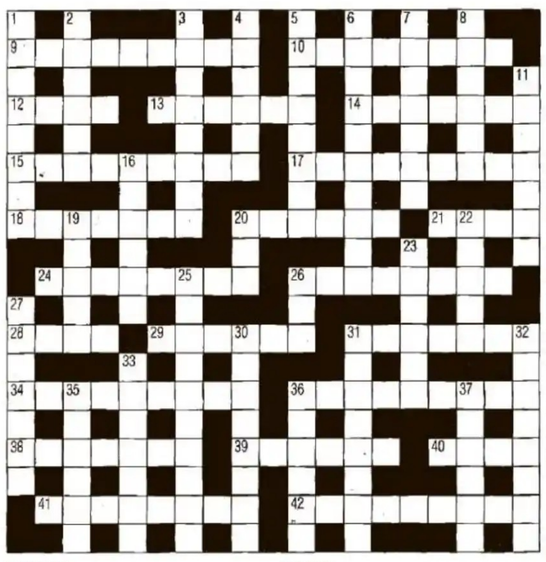
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: FUDGE SHINY COSTLY STORMY
Answer: Even though it was plugged in, the electric guitar without strings was — "CHORD-LESS"

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 4037



CRYPTIC

ACROSS
9 At an awful price, about to get Indian food (5,4)
10 Don't include - among the cars to be garaged? (5,3)
12 No novice; a girl (4)
13 Meaning to bring it in from an outside source (6)
14 Unimportant test the four are taking part in (7)
15 I drop Charlie off and come to shore (5,4)
17 Not altogether friendly when Arthur and I go in (9)
18 Pip, the dog, is inside tied up (7)
20 Smelling unpleasant, having got caught in the drain, somehow (6)
21 Begin by taking round to the fold (4)
24 A pest on the golf course? (8)
26 "An old roue" is mere banter (8)
28 Left again (4)
29 Seem annoyed when speaking of the wife (6)
31 Gives information about plants (7)
34 Reminded oneself of what the word "mother" means (4,5)
36 Danger averted by a yell from right beside you? (5,4)
38 A tin of split peas served as guest food? (7)
39 Supports and foots the bills for (6)
40 Looks at the said agreements (4)
41 See to it that you convince beyond doubt (4,4)
42 Move across and sit by (9)

DOWN
1 Knowledgeable about heraldry, is peeved (2,2,4)
2 The street name is a girl's name (6)
3 For the company employee, decisive management (4,4)
4 Having lost the lead for a short time (6)
5 Great excitement on the home turn (4,4)
6 Having the boss mentality, he does all the planning (10)
7 Come back to see the parson and I sit beside him (7)
8 Having knocked back the drink, she concocts a lie (6)
11 Shelling out about a pound for using the tennis court? (7)
16 Having injured an arm, he had protected it (6)
19 The figure you have in mind to sculpt (5)
20 Catch in the light (3)
22 Calls for the sheets (5)
23 Putting a silly point in is mad (6)
25 The magazine proprietor's eldest child? (5,5)
26 May be humming the note you hear (3)
27 Stick back the animals with the other animals (7)
30 Stopped first to go through the various deeds (8)
31 A lot of wood from which to make church pews? (4,4)
32 With a bunch of pals, she had been playing in the water (8)
33 What's biting when the fisherman gets a bite? (7)
35 A refusal to give a home to one boy (6)
36 Plans to get child star performing (6)
37 Why on a seesaw, nonetheless? (6)

ACROSS
9 Not mapped (9)
10 Foolish talk (8)
12 Garden of paradise (4)
13 Long-term shock (6)
14 Inflatable part (7)
15 Refraining from use (9)
17 Racing dog (9)
18 Naval servicemen (7)
20 Liberate (6)
21 Dirt in chimney (4)
24 Full of guilt (8)
26 Fortified place (8)
28 Poker state (4)
29 African antelope (6)
31 Nose and throat condition (7)
34 Gives up (9)
36 Freed (9)
38 Bird of prey (7)
39 Abnormal animal (6)
40 Without fat (4)
41 Sea organisms (8)
42 Scientific study of sound (9)

DOWN
1 Tepid (8)
2 Right to approach (6)
3 Naked, commonly (8)
4 Alter slightly (6)
5 Untidy (8)
6 Criminal (10)
7 Diplomat (7)
8 Horse-drawn carriage (6)
11 Learned (7)
16 Set fire to (6)
19 Bird's resting place (5)
20 Employ (3)
22 Smell (5)
23 Beer (6)
25 Faultless (10)
26 Indian state (3)
27 Spicy pepper (7)
30 Taking for granted (8)
31 Helper on ship (5,3)
32 Pleasure seeker (8)
33 Flow of electricity (7)
35 Cuddle closely (6)
36 Deadly (6)
37 Dissertation (6)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 12402

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 1, Actor 6, Po-N-ds 9, F-action 10, G-ruff 11, Plonk 12, Bully 13, Ca-bare-t 15, D-I'm 17, All-y 18, P-raise 19, P-lays 20, Chorus 22, Fido 24, (s-)Had(-e) 25, Politic(-ian) 26, Pla-I-n 27, Tab-OO 28, Atlas 29, Outp-ace 30, Fault 31, Trees
DOWN: 2, Cereal 3, Off day 4, RAF 5, Stout 6, Poplar's 7, On-ly 8, Dennis 12, (hell's)Bells 13, Cat-Ch. 14, Blood 15, Digit 16, Medoc 18, P-ylon 19, Pull-out 21, Havana 22, Fitter 23, Dilate 25, Pippa 26, Pool 28, A-Ct.

EASY
ACROSS: 1, Asked 6, Cower 9, Demigod 10, Cabin 11, Nears 12, Dents 13, Demoted 15, Ant 17, User 18, Hoards 19, Drool 20, Cherry 22, Boar 24, Ear 25, Defends 26, Libel 27, Spain 28, Pilot 29, Centred 30, Greed 31, Teeth
DOWN: 2, Scales 3, Editor 4, Den 5, Fired 6, Control 7, Odes 8, Errand 12, Decry 13, Dunce 14, Meter 15, Argon 16, Tsars 18, Hovel 19, Drained 21, Hamper 22, Beside 23, Adroit 25, Delta 26, Lice 28, Pet

◆SU-DO-KU-6889◆

	9			6	7			4
		3		4		2	7	
			2					6
		6	9		2	7	3	
	3	5	8		6	1		
6					5			
	8	2		1		9		
3			6	9			2	

hard

SOLUTION TO 6888

2	5	3	8	7	1	6	9	4
7	9	6	5	3	4	8	2	1
8	4	1	6	9	2	7	3	5
1	8	2	3	6	7	4	5	9
4	3	5	9	1	8	2	7	6
6	7	9	2	4	5	1	8	3
3	2	7	1	5	6	9	4	8
5	1	4	7	8	9	3	6	2
9	6	8	4	2	3	5	1	7

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

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S1	E1	I1	T1	G2	S1	R1	Triple Word Score
T1	M3	H4	C3	E1	A1	E1	
E1	O1	A1	L1	A1	V4	S1	
M3	A1	E1	R1	C3	D2	H4	2nd Letter Double

RACK 1
RACK 2
RACK 3
RACK 4

PAR SCORE 140-150
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

A1	B3	A1	S1	H4	E1	D2	RACK 1 = 89
A1	D2	D2	U1	C3	T1	S1	RACK 2 = 83
B3	A1	N1	D2	B3	O1	X8	RACK 3 = 107
C3	A1	B3	B3	A1	G2	E1	RACK 4 = 92

PAR SCORE 245-255 JUDD'S TOTAL 371

HITORI-3343

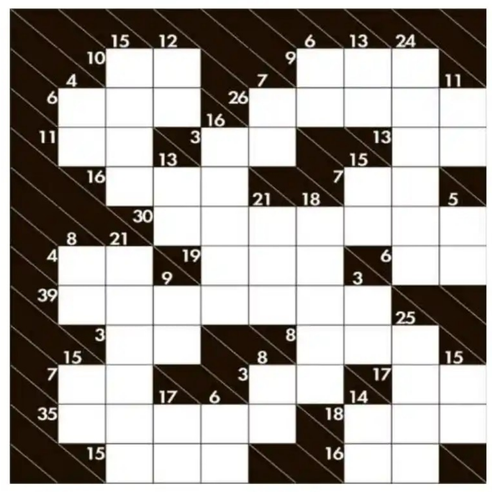
3	3	6	1	4	5	8	7
3	1	7	7	3	8	8	2
7	8	5	2	3	7	4	1
7	5	2	8	7	6	7	3
8	5	7	3	6	7	2	7
7	2	8	6	7	3	7	5
5	3	8	2	7	4	6	7
6	7	3	8	5	2	1	8

SOLUTION TO 3342

■	7	8	■	3	1	2	■
4	■	6	5	■	2	■	3
7	3	2	■	8	5	6	4
1	8	7	4	■	3	■	5
■	5	■	3	4	■	1	6
2	■	5	7	■	6	3	1
3	4	■	1	6	■	7	■
5	6	3	2	1	7	4	8

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

KAKURO- 3343



SOLUTION TO 3342

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3896

■							8	■
	■	3			6		■	9
	9	■				■		
			6		■		7	
	3	6		■	1			
	5	4	■	7	■			
		■				2	4	
	7		2				■	1
■				1			5	3

SOLUTION TO 3895

7	1	2	6	5	4	9	8	3
3	9	5	1	8	2	7	6	4
8	6	4	9	7	3	5	1	2
9	7	6	8	4	1	2	3	5
1	4	3	5	2	9	6	7	8
5	2	8	7	3	6	1	4	9
6	5	9	4	1	8	3	2	7
2	8	1	3	9	7	4	5	6
4	3	7	2	6	5	8	9	1

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

The first phase broke their spine in north Bengal and Jangalmahal. Whatever was left, South 24 Parganas will break their knees and feet – democratically
Political Theatre
Once in power, the BJP will open files of those who tortured mothers and sisters of Sandeshkhali and put them in jail

Meet the leader

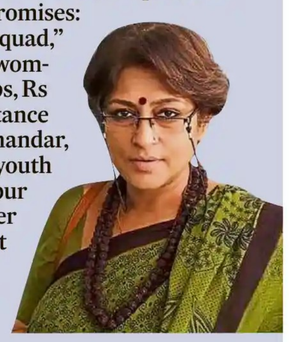
Roopa Ganguly
BJP
Sonarpur Dakshin

Draupadi — wronged, fiery and unyielding — remains the defining image of Roopa Ganguly, a role that brought her national fame and shaped her larger-than-life public persona. Long before B R Chopra's Mahabharata turned her into a household name, she had established herself as a serious actor in Bengali cinema, working with directors like Mrinal Sen, Aparna Sen and Rituparno Ghosh, with her performances being marked by restraint and emotional depth. Trained in Rabindra Sangeet and classical dance, she also won a National Award for playback singing.

She is now the BJP candidate from Sonarpur Dakshin, up against Trinamool Congress's Arundhati Maitra—another actress, though not yet with the same level of fame that she commands.

Roopa joined the BJP in 2015 and soon took the helm of the party's women's wing in West Bengal. She contested the 2016 Assembly polls from Howrah North but lost, and the same year survived an attack while returning from visiting victims of political violence in South 24 Parganas. The BJP sent her to the Rajya Sabha in 2016. She has since seen phases of prominence and sidelining.

On the campaign trail, she often rides pillion on party workers' motorcycles, engaging directly with voters. She blends her personality with the BJP's promises: a "Durga Suraksha Squad," 33% reservation for women in government jobs, Rs 3,000 monthly assistance under Annapurna Bhandar, alongside a focus on youth employment. Sonarpur is also personal for her as it is where she built a home for her late parents.



Trivia

The 1965 Assembly election in Kerala is peculiar for one reason. The polls were necessitated following the fall of the R Shankar-led Congress government through a no-confidence motion. After the polls, no party or alliance were in a position to form the government. The Assembly could not be constituted as a government could not be formed. One of the winners was a filmmaker Ramu Karyat, who could not officially become an MLA as the Assembly was dissolved.

Cash, gifts flow freely as Tamil Nadu election turns costliest yet

Anti-corruption group flags rampant vote-buying; says money power hit 'dangerous proportions'

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

Arappor Iyakkam, an anti-corruption NGO in Tamil Nadu, ran the "My Vote is Not for Sale" campaign in about 150 places across the state in the run-up to the April 23 Assembly elections, educating people not to receive money from political parties to vote.

TAMIL NADU
Assembly Poll

The NGO has now said this election would go down in history as one of the costliest ever, with money and gift articles flowing like water. Jayaram Venkatesan of Arappor Iyakkam alleged that the amount of money spent this election would run into several thousand crores.

"Political parties were prepared to spend huge amounts to buy votes this time as they felt that the contest would be intense and the victory margins thin," Venkatesan told *DH*. Another reason the amount was so huge was that people were being forced to be loyal to the highest "payer".

He alleged that both the DMK and the AIADMK alliance distributed money across the state, while the TVK — a newcomer — did it in one or two pockets.

From half-gram gold coins and silver articles to nose piercings, representatives allegedly home-delivered gifts to voters in many places, especially in western Tamil Nadu. Additionally, kitchen utensils, appliances, and other household items were reportedly delivered to people during Pongal this year.

The minimum going rate for a vote this time was Rs 1,000 in most parts of the state, said Venkatesan, adding that, in a few places, parties even offered Rs 3,000-4,000 for a vote.

Women show their identity cards as they queue to vote at a polling station in Chennai, on Thursday. PTI FILE

"We have received information that political parties approached even those people whose houses sported a sticker that they would not receive money for votes," he said.

The activist also questioned the ECI for not acting against candidates even where there was clear video evidence of bribery.

For the record, the EC said seizures in Tamil Nadu — including cash and articles — accounted for Rs 599.24 crore since the elections were announced.

It didn't surprise many in Tamil Nadu when people in different parts of it took to the streets to protest that "cash for votes" had reached nearby areas but not theirs. "This time, cash for votes wasn't a secret. It was blatant and in broad daylight. Parties even took turns. Unless there's an awakening from both sides (parties and voters), this trend is unstoppable. It has already reached dangerous proportions," a senior politician told *DH* on condition of anonymity.

Tamil Nadu has the ignominy of being the only state where elections and by-elections have been rescinded in the past — 2016, 2017, and 2019 — due to the rampant use of money power.

Prof Ramu Manivannan, former head of the University of Madras' Department of Politics and Public Administration, told *DH* that elections had become a caste-and-money game.

"People take money because the system is corrupt. They collect from candidates every election just to pay it back to the system in the form of bribes over five years. The money poured into this election is a good economic indicator. The media should track election spending just like how it reports on liquor sales spiking after Deepavali or Onam," he added.

Political commentator T N Raghu told *DH* that it was a paradox that Tamil Nadu, which prides itself on being an ancient civilisation, reports the highest number of cash-for-votes incidents, with the DMK and AIADMK taking the lead.

"This practice has been there for a long time, but it has reached alarming proportions this time... People who receive it are also culpable, but those who give are guiltier," he added.

Poll for generation: Stalin hails high voter turnout

CHENNAI, PTI: The high voter turnout in the Tamil Nadu Assembly polls on April 23 was a commendable display of civic responsibility, reflecting what Chief Minister M K Stalin described as an election for an entire generation.

People braved the scorching sun to exercise their franchise. Many travelled long distances to cast their votes and returned to their workplaces on Thursday night, he said.

"Rather than thinking 'it's just one vote,' the belief that 'this is an election for an entire generation' may have been the driving force behind this enthusiasm. My commendations to all such responsible citizens," the CM said in a post on 'X'.

According to the Election Commission, the state recorded 85.15% voting.

A supporter holds a BJP flag during an election campaign rally addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in support of party candidate Ratna Debnath and others at Panihati, in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal, on Friday. PTI

Modi, Shah accuse TMC of 'jungle raj'; Mamata hits back

KALYAN RAY
KOLKATA, DHNS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday sharpened their attacks on the Trinamool Congress, promising to end "TMC's reign of jungle raj" and create an environment in which "mothers and sisters will not feel scared to come out of their homes even at 2 am."

In response, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said "those sitting in Delhi" have been plotting to impose their agenda on the people of Bengal, adding that every attempt to undermine the state would be met with a decisive democratic pushback.

"Under the TMC government, daughters are not safe, but under a BJP government, not a single rapist or criminal will be safe. Everyone will be held accountable," Modi said at a rally in Panihati, where Ratna Debnath, mother of RG Kar victim, is contesting on a BJP ticket.

"Bengal has been troubled by 15 years of maha-jungle raj. In these 15 years, much blood has been shed. A mother who made her daughter study to become a doctor, who fell victim to TMC's jungle raj, has been made a BJP candidate. The BJP has also given an opportunity to the Sandeshkhali victims to lead," he said.

Shah too echoed similar sentiments at a rally in Uttarpara. "Mothers and sisters will not feel scared to come out of their homes even at 2 am after BJP forms the government in Bengal," he said.

Earlier in the day, Modi took a boat ride on the Ganga in Kolkata and shared photographs and a video on social media.

Addressing an election meeting in Howrah, Mamata said Modi would not be able to undertake a similar boat ride on the Yamuna in the national capital due to pollution, blaming the BJP-led administration for the river's condition.

War of words over JU

Kolkata's Jadavpur University found itself at the centre of a war of words between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday, reports DHNS.

Modi said at a BJP election rally in Panihati that the university had turned into a symbol of unrest during the Trinamool Congress' rule since 2011.

Meanwhile, Banerjee accused Modi of disparaging one of India's leading academic institutions.

POLL DIGEST

Two TN police officers die on election duty

CHENNAI, PTI: Two Tamil Nadu police personnel—a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) and a Special Sub-Inspector (SSI)—died due to sudden health complications while on election bandobust duty during the Assembly polls, officials said on Friday.

The deceased were identified as Ramakrishnan (55), DSP, NIB CID, Ramanathapuram district, and Kannadhasan (59), SSI attached to Malliyakari police station in Salem.

EC suspends Hingalganj OC over 'bias'

KOLKATA, PTI: The Election Commission ordered the suspension of the officer-in-charge (OC) of the Hingalganj police station in North 24 Parganas district following allegations that he was acting in a partisan manner.

In a communication to West Bengal Chief Secretary Dushyant Nariala, the EC said it had examined a report sent by state Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Manoj Agarwal on April 21 regarding complaints of bias and an alleged nexus between the OC and "local elements".

TMC, BJP bullish on poll turnout

In all, 92.88% of 3.6 cr voters exercised their franchise across 152 seats

ANIRBAN BHAUMIK
KOLKATA, DHNS

The high turnout in the first phase of the West Bengal Assembly polls has sparked claims and counterclaims by the ruling Trinamool Congress and the Opposition BJP, with each side asserting that the tide had already turned decisively in its favour.

WEST BENGAL
Assembly Poll

The first phase of the polling on Thursday covered 152 of the state's 294 Assembly constituencies. According to the latest data from the Election Commission, 92.88% of the 3.6 crore voters exercised their franchise.

Of the 16 districts where voting was held, Coochbehar in North Bengal registered the highest voter turnout at 96.04%, followed by Dakshin Dinajpur (95.44%) and Jalpaiguri (94.65%). Malda and Murshidabad recorded 94.46% and 93.61% turnouts, respectively.

Sitalkuchi in Coochbehar registered the highest turnout at 97.53%. Eleven other constituencies — Hemtabad, Bhagabangola, Domkal, Harirampur, Farakka, Kushmandi, Murarai, Maynaguri, Raghunathganj, Sitai, and Suti — registered more than 96% turnout.

"The wave of change had been visible in West Bengal for a long time. But the first phase of voting yesterday put its seal on it," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at a rally in Panihati on the outskirts of Kolkata on Friday. "The tide of support in the BJP's favour sounded the conch shell of our victory."

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said the BJP would win in more than 110 of the 152 constituencies that went to polls in Phase 1. He said the TMC's exit was imminent, and that the BJP would soon be in power in "Anga, Banga, and Kalinga"—ancient names of Bihar, Bengal, and Odisha, respectively—together.

"Polling in the first phase confirmed that the TMC will have a landslide victory with a big mandate," Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said in Howrah. "From Alipurduar, Coochbehar, Uttar Dinajpur, Malda and Murshidabad, the BJP will end up with a big zero. The high turnout has been a decisive message against the Special Intensive Revision of the electoral rolls."

TMC leaders said people turned up in hordes because they wanted to avert any risk after the deletion of names.

Clockwise from top left, Raghav Chadha, Sandeep Pathak, Ashok Mittal, Swati Maliwal, Harbhajan Singh, Vikramjit Singh Sahney and Rajinder Gupta. PTI

AAP exodus hands BJP new faces for 2027 Punjab battle

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

With the entry of seven AAP Rajya Sabha MPs into the BJP, the saffron party has effectively kickstarted its campaign for the 2027 Punjab Assembly polls. The move is also seen as driven by the BJP's push to further strengthen its numbers in the Rajya Sabha, inching closer to the two-thirds mark.

After a press conference, former AAP MP Raghav Chadha visited the BJP headquarters along with Sandeep Pathak and Ashok Mittal, where they met party president Nitin Nabin.

BJP general secretary Tarun Chugh said those aligned with the "truth" had joined the party. "The way AAP has functioned, Punjab has been turned into a syndicate of loot and is being exploited. This has now been exposed, and those suffocating under this corrupt system have left Kejriwal," he said.

For the BJP, the development is not merely about consolidating its strength in the Upper House; it also marks the opening of a new electoral front in Punjab. Six of the seven MPs are from Punjab, where the BJP currently lacks legislative presence and where the AAP government led by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann is the principal target ahead of 2027.

The entry of Chadha, Pathak, Mittal, Harbhajan Singh, Rajinder Gupta and Vikramjit Singh Sahney gives the BJP a set of recognisable faces in the state, leaders who were until recently associated with AAP's win in 2022.

BJP's Punjab unit chief Sunil Jakhar framed the shift in electoral terms. "This was the right time to leave the sinking ship," he said, citing AAP's governance record on corruption and law and order.

In 2022, AAP secured 92 of 117 Assembly seats on an anti-corruption plank.

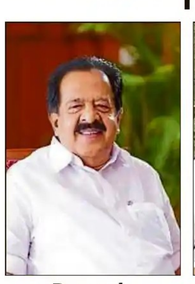
For the BJP, the implications in the Rajya Sabha are substantial. Its standalone strength has risen from 106 to 113 following the merger. With support from nominated members, the party's effective strength is estimated at around 120. The NDA bloc, in total, stands at roughly 148, well above the majority mark of 123.

INTERNAL CONTEST

Congress faces open jostling for Kerala CM post

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

While a podcast launched by senior Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala and the release of a book by AICC general secretary KC Venugopal compiling his selected speeches are widely seen as acts of self-projection with an eye on the Kerala Chief Minister's post, supporters of Opposition Leader VD Satheesan are openly projecting him as the next CM of Kerala.



Ramesh Chennithala

Kodikunnil Suresh

KC Venugopal

VD Satheesan

As overt and covert campaigns by senior Congress leaders for the top post gather momentum even ahead of the election results, former state police chief TP Senkumar has added fuel to the fire by flagging the name of Congress MP Kodikunnil Suresh.

KERALA
Assembly Poll

"Why is the Congress not even considering senior leader Kodikunnil Suresh as CM even as party leader Rahul Gandhi often speaks for Dalits and OBCs?" Senkumar, who has previously supported the RSS-BJP, said in a social media post.

Despite Rahul's public caution to Kerala Congress leaders against self-promotion, leaders and their supporters continue to defy it openly.

While some senior leaders openly project Venugopal as the next CM, rival camps have launched a campaign arguing against triggering additional bypolls in the state.

If Venugopal is made CM, a ruling front MLA would have to resign to enable him to contest a by-election, and the Alappuzha Lok Sabha seat he currently represents would also go to the polls. Venugopal has already faced criticism for resigning his Rajya Sabha seat to contest the 2024 Lok Sabha election, after which the BJP-led NDA secured the vacated seat, his detractors point out.

Venugopal told reporters on Friday that he was not interested in debates over the next Congress CM, stressing that the party follows a set procedure to decide the post after election results are announced.

There were also reports that Venugopal was incorrectly listed as the next Kerala CM on Wikipedia on Friday, before the reference was removed; screenshots of the entry have since surfaced.

Chennithala, who announced his podcast titled Kerala Yatra on Friday, said it was not aimed at personal political gain but intended to discuss the state's development vision and ideas.

Supporters of Satheesan argue that his leadership of the United Democratic Front over the past five years makes him the natural choice for the top post.

Meanwhile, the CPM has mocked the Congress over the competing campaigns. Senior leader AK Balan quipped: "The Congress is writing horoscopes of a child even before pregnancy."

EC acting like BJP department: Cong leader

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM/ NEW DELHI, PTI: Congress general secretary K C Venugopal on Friday accused the EC of acting like a "BJP department," alleging that it swiftly issued a notice to party chief Mallikarjun Kharge over his remarks against the prime minister, while taking no action on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent public address.

Venugopal claimed that the PMs recent public address, following the defeat of bills related to women's reservation and delimitation in Parliament, was "a clear violation of election rules and the Model Code of Conduct."

However, he alleged that the EC had taken no action on the matter despite complaints from Opposition.

UN experts flag forced conversions of girls in Pak

LONDON, PTI: UN experts have expressed serious concern over the continued abduction and forced religious conversion through marriage of women and girls from minority communities in Pakistan, saying "impunity" was fuelling the practice.

"Any change of religion or belief must be genuinely free from coercion, and marriage must be based on full and free consent, which is not legally possible when the victim is a child," the experts said in a press release issued by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on Wednesday.

According to the experts, about 75% of the victims in 2025 were Hindus and 25% Christians, with nearly 80% of incidents reported from Sindh province. "Impunity", they said, is fuelling this "relentless practice". "Adolescent girls between 14 and 18 are particularly targeted, and some girls are even younger," they said, adding that poverty and marginalisation increase vulnerability to such abuse.

The experts noted that victims often face physical and sexual abuse, social stigma and severe trauma, and are deprived of their freedom of belief.

Iran FM arrives in Pakistan amid deadlock over peace talks with US

They will be making an offer aimed at satisfying our demands: Trump

ISLAMABAD/WASHINGTON, REUTERS/PTI

Pakistani soldiers patrol a road as the country prepares to host US and Iran for the second round of peace talks in Islamabad on Friday. REUTERS

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi arrived in Islamabad late on Friday for a fresh round of diplomatic efforts aimed at restarting peace talks with the United States, as Pakistan steps up mediation between the two sides.

Araqchi, accompanied by a small delegation including government spokesperson Ismaeel Buqai, is expected to meet Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Gen Syed Asim Munir during his brief visit. Pakistani officials said discussions with the mediation team could pave the way for a second round of Iran-US peace talks in Islamabad, although sources indicated Araqchi was not initially scheduled to meet US negotiators immediately upon arrival.

A US logistics and security team is already in place in Islamabad to facilitate potential talks. US President Donald Trump is dispatching special envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner for the talks, with both expected to depart for Pakistan on Saturday, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said.

Leavitt noted that Washington has seen some progress from the Iranian side and hopes further advances will be made during the weekend discussions.

US Vice President J D Vance is prepared to travel to Pakistan if negotiations show signs of progress, she added. The first round of talks, held on April 11 and 12, failed to produce a breakthrough. Araqchi said on X that his visit to Pakistan, along with planned trips to Oman and Russia, aims to coordinate with partners on bilateral matters and consult on regional developments. Pakistani officials said Araqchi's visit is focused on presenting Iran's proposals for talks, which Pakistan would convey to Washington as part of its mediation efforts.

President Donald Trump said on Friday that Iran plans to make an offer aimed at satisfying US demands. "They're making an offer and we'll have to see," Trump said.

US weighs suspending Spain from Nato over Iran war rift

WASHINGTON, REUTERS: An internal Pentagon email outlines options for the US to punish Nato allies it believes failed to support US operations in the war with Iran, including suspending Spain from the alliance and reviewing the US position on Britain's claim to the Falkland Islands, a US official told Reuters.

The policy options are detailed in a note prepared by Elbridge Colby, the Pentagon's top policy adviser, who expressed frustration at some allies' perceived reluctance or refusal to grant the US access, basing and overflight rights for the Iran war, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to describe the email.

Colby wrote that ABO is "just the absolute baseline for Nato", according to the official, who added that the options were circulating at high levels. One option in the email envisions suspending "difficult" countries from important or prestigious positions within Nato.

President Donald Trump has criticised Nato allies for not sending their navies to help reopen the Strait of Hormuz, which was closed to global shipping following the start of the air war on February 28. He has also said he is considering withdrawing from the alliance.

Pentagon Press Secretary Kingsley Wilson said: "The War Department will ensure that the President has credible options to ensure that our allies are no longer a paper tiger and instead do their part".

Asked whether it is possible to suspend a Nato ally, a Nato official said "Nato's founding treaty does not foresee any provision for suspension of Nato membership".

PEDRO SANCHEZ
Spanish Prime Minister

"Spain is a reliable member within Nato which is fulfilling all its obligations. As a result, I am absolutely not worried.

WORLD AT A GLANCE

US prosecutor Jeanine Pirro has dropped a criminal probe against Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell clearing the way for his replacement's confirmation. Pirro said the inspector general for the Fed would instead look into renovation cost overruns. AFP FILE

33,000 Indian soldiers listed in UK's world war memorial

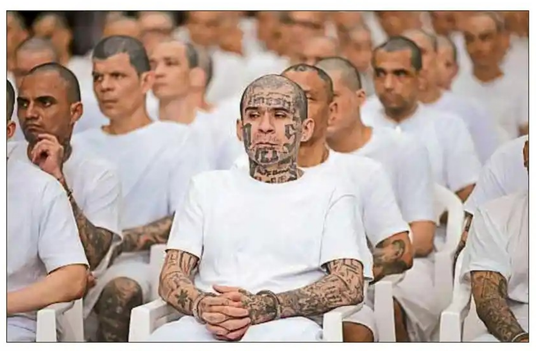
▸ The names of 33,000 Indian Army soldiers who died in the First World War but were missing from a memorial in Iraq have finally been commemorated in digital form, PTI reports from London.

Iraq, then known as Mesopotamia, was the scene of the British Empire's largest operations outside Europe in the early 20th century. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC), a charity tasked with commemorating all Commonwealth servicemen and women who died during the two World Wars, has introduced new digital name panels for the Basra Memorial in Iraq to ensure the missing names are included. Launched earlier this month, the digital memorial includes the names of Indian soldiers, brought together for the first time, alongside more than 46,000 Commonwealth service personnel. "The Mesopotamia Campaign was one of the toughest campaigns in the First World War, with Indian soldiers dying in the tens of thousands; yet their names were never added to the Basra Memorial," said Shrabani Basu, a member of the CWGC Global Advisory Panel.

Can build 50 N-reactors: China

▸ China can build up to 50 nuclear reactors simultaneously, the country's atomic authority has said, as Beijing gears up to expand its nuclear power sector to reduce dependence on fossil fuels amid the ongoing US-Israel conflict with Iran, PTI reports from Beijing.

China has the ability to run dozens of nuclear projects concurrently across the full project lifecycle — from design to construction — according to a report released this week by the China Nuclear Energy Association. "China's nuclear technology capabilities have moved from 'following' to 'keeping pace', and in some areas to 'leading'," the report said.



Members of the deadly Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) gang attend a remote mass court hearing in Tecoluca, El Salvador, on Thursday. AFP

Few takers for Trump 'gold card'

▸ President Donald Trump's "gold card" visa, under which a foreigner can pay at least $1 million to legally live and work in the US, has so far been approved for only one person, Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick said on Thursday — appearing to fall short of an earlier claim, AP/PTI reports from Washington.

After its launch in December, Lutnick had said the government sold $1.3 billion "worth" in just a few days, as Trump held up the gilded card and described it as "essentially the green card on steroids".

Putin may attend G20 summit in US

Trump calls Russia's exit from the group a mistake

MOSCOW/WASHINGTON, REUTERS

Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President Donald Trump in Anchorage, Alaska. AFP FILE PHOTO

Russian President Vladimir Putin could travel to the G20 summit in Miami in December, the Kremlin said on Friday after US President Donald Trump suggested it would be helpful if he attended and that it had been a mistake to expel Russia from the G8.

The US has invited Russia to the annual meeting of the Group of 20 nations that Washington is hosting this year in Miami, and Moscow has accepted the invitation, a US official said on Friday.

Putin has not attended a G20 summit since 2019, first due to the COVID-19 pandemic and later following Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, which triggered the biggest crisis in relations between Moscow and the West since the depths of the Cold War. "President Putin may go to Miami as a member of the G20, or he may not go, or another Russian representative may go," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

A senior US administration official, however, said no formal invitations had yet been issued. "But Russia is a G20 member and will be invited to attend ministerial meetings and the leaders' summit," the official said on condition of anonymity.

The Washington Post had reported that Trump intended to invite Putin, though he later told reporters that he did not know of any invitation or whether Putin would attend.

India approves Rs 30 billion swap support for Maldives

MALE, PTI: India has approved the first withdrawal of Rs 30 billion as part of its continuing economic and financial assistance to the Maldives, according to the Indian High Commission here.

The funds are being released under the first drawdown of the SAARC Currency Swap Framework, the Indian mission said in a statement on Thursday.

The arrangement under the 'Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC countries' was signed between the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Maldives government during President Mohamed Muizzu's state visit to New Delhi in October 2024, it added.

The earlier $400 million withdrawal, availed by the Maldives under this framework in October 2024, matured on Thursday, the Indian High Commission said. Maldives Foreign Ministry said the settlement of the $400 million facility reflects the government's commitment to meeting its financial obligations.

US targets China over alleged AI model exploitation

WASHINGTON, AP/PTI

The Trump administration is vowing to crack down on foreign tech companies' exploitation of US artificial intelligence models, singling out China at a time the country is narrowing the gap with the US in the AI race.

In a Thursday memo, Michael Kratsios, the president's chief science and technology adviser, accused foreign entities "principally based in China" of engaging in deliberate, industrial-scale campaigns to "distil", or extract capabilities from, leading AI systems developed in the US, thereby "exploiting American expertise and innovation".

The administration, Kratsios wrote, will work with American AI companies to identify such activities, build defences and find ways to punish offenders.

The memo comes at a time when China is challenging US dominance in artificial intelligence, an area where the White House says the US must prevail to set global standards and reap economic and military benefits. But the US-China gap in the performance of top AI models has "effectively closed", according to a recent report from Stanford University's Institute for Human-Centred AI.

China's embassy said it opposed "the unjustified suppression of Chinese companies by the US".

"China has always been committed to promoting scientific and technological progress through cooperation and healthy competition. China attaches great importance to the protection of intellectual property rights," said Liu Pengyu, the embassy spokesperson.

In Beijing, China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun told reporters on Friday that the US claims were groundless.

"China firmly opposes this. We urge the US to respect facts, discard prejudice, stop suppressing China's technological development, and do more to promote scientific and technological exchange and cooperation between the two countries," he said.

Appeals court blocks Trump asylum order

WASHINGTON, AP/PTI: An appeals court on Friday blocked President Donald Trump's executive order suspending asylum access, a key pillar of the Republican president's plan to crack down on migration at the southern border of the US.

A three-judge panel from the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit found that immigration laws give people the right to apply for asylum at the border. The panel concluded that the Immigration and Nationality Act doesn't authorise the president to remove the plaintiffs under "procedures of his own making," allow him to suspend plaintiffs' right to apply for asylum or curtail procedures for adjudicating their anti-torture claims.

"The power by proclamation to temporarily suspend the entry of specified foreign individuals into the United States does not contain implicit authority to override the INA's mandatory process to summarily remove foreign individuals," wrote Judge J Michelle Childs.

ACLU attorney Lee Gelernt said the appellate ruling is "essential for those fleeing danger who have been denied even a hearing to present asylum claims under the Trump administration's unlawful and inhumane executive order."

ನೃಪತುಂಗ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು
(NAAC A+ ಮಾನ್ಯತೆ ಪಡೆದ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ)

NRUPATHUNGA UNIVERSITY, BENGALURU
(NAAC A+ Accredited Institution)

ನೃಪತುಂಗ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು – 560001. E-mail: nrupathungauniversity@gmail.com, Ph : 080-29602924

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ನಂಬರ್: NU / 2026 - 27/35 & NU/2026-27/SE001 Dated: 24/04/2026

ಇ- ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

2026–27 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿಗೆ ನೃಪತುಂಗ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯದ ಉಪಯೋಗಕ್ಕಾಗಿ 2024 ರ ಅಥವಾ ನಂತರದ ಮಾಡೆಲ್ ನ ಎ.ಸಿ 03 ವಾಹನಗಳ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆಯಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಸುಸಜ್ಜಿತವಾದ ಹಾಗೂ ಉತ್ತಮ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಯಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಹ್ಯಾಚ್ ಬ್ಯಾಕ್ / ಸಿಡಾನ್ ಮಾದರಿಯ ಸ್ವಿಫ್ಟ್ ಡಿಜ್ಜೈರ್ /ಟಯೋಟ ಇಟಿಯೋಸ್ ಹಾಗೂ ಇತರೆ ಸಮಾನಾಂತರ ಮಾದರಿಯ ವಾಹನಗಳನ್ನು ನುರಿತ ಚಾಲಕರೊಂದಿಗೆ ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇಲೆ ಬಾಡಿಗೆಗೆ ಒದಗಿಸಲು ಅರ್ಹ ವಾಹನ ಮಾಲೀಕರು/ ಟ್ರಾವೆಲ್ಸ್ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ – ಏಜೆನ್ಸಿಗಳಿಂದ ದ್ವಿ ಲಕೋಟೆ (2 Covers) ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇ ಟೆಂಡರ್ಸ್ (E-Procurement Portal ಮುಖಾಂತರ) ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ವಿವರಗಳು: (1) ಕಛೇರಿ ನೃಪತುಂಗ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ. (2) ಮಾಸಿಕ ದರ ಹಾಗೂ ಇಎಮ್‌ಡಿ ಮೊತ್ತದ ವಿವರಗಳು ಗರಿಷ್ಟ ರೂ 40,000/– ಎಸಿ, ತೆರಿಗೆ, ಇಎಮ್‌ಡಿ ಮೊತ್ತ 18,900/–.

ಸೂಚನೆ: ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗೆ ಕಛೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಿ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು. (1) ಇ ಟೆಂಡರ್ (E-Procurement) ಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳನ್ನು ಅಂತರ್ಜಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ರವಾನಿಸಲು ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ವೇಳೆ **02.05.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 5.30 ಕ್ಕೆ.** 2) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಲಕೋಟೆ ಮತ್ತು ವೇಳೆ (E- Portal ನಲ್ಲಿ) **04.05.2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ.** 3) ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಲಕೋಟೆಯನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ **05.05.2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 12.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ.**

ಸಹಿ/–
ಕುಲಸಚಿವರು (ಆಡಳಿತ)

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಾಪ್ರ/344/ಶಿರಡಿ ಸಾಯಿ/2026–27

BENGALURU EAST CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Commissioner, Bengaluru East City Corporation RHB Colony, ITPL Main Road, Opp to Phoenix Mall, Bengaluru - 560048

No: Addl.Commissioner(D)BECC/PR/335/2025-26 Date:24-04-2026

NOTIFICATION

Applications are invited from eligible law graduates or newly admitted lawyers for the post of **"Legal Assistant"** - 2 posts in the office of the Head of Legal Cell.

The tenure of the said post is 11 months and the recruitment will be on the basis of honorarium of Rs. 30,000/- per month.

- Selection method through direct interview.
- Application should be submitted along with complete bio-data and official documents.

Address to apply : The Commissioner, Bengaluru East City Corporation, RHB Colony, ITPL Main Road, Opp To Phoenix Mall, Bengaluru -560048

Only applications submitted by post on or before Date: **05.05.2026** duly mentioning "Application for the post of **Legal Assistant"** will be considered.

Sd/- Additional Commissioner (Development)
Bengaluru East City Corporation

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager - 3,
1st Floor, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru -560052.

No.DGM-3/BSWML/TEND/26/2025-26/Call-2 **Date:24.04.2026.**

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT)
(Through GOK KPPP only)

The Deputy General Manager-3, BSWML on behalf of the Managing Director, BSWML, Bengaluru invites the tender from eligible bidders for the works detailed in the table below. The Tender documents can be downloaded from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Website (https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in) on payment of prescribed fee noted against each item of work (non-refundable) in the form of e-Payment through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal. The Bidder shall submit the bid through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal. Other details may be seen in the bid document.

SL No	Name of the Work	Amount put to tender Rs.in lakhs (Excluding GST)	EMD (in Rupees)	Stipulated Period of Contract
01	Bio-Enzyme based Odour Suppression and Basic infrastructure development works in and around MSGP processing plants in Doddaballapura Constituency. Call-2.	823.74	12,35,610/-	11 Months

Calendar of Events:

1. Last date to upload pre-bid queries: **27.04.2026 upto 15.00 Hrs.** in KPP Portal.
2. Pre bid meeting: **28.04.2026 at 15.00 Hrs** at the office of CE & CGM-2 (Tech), BSWML, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanthanagar, Bangalore.
3. Last date for submission of the bids: **02.05.2026 upto 16.00 Hrs.**
4. Date of opening of Technical bids on: **04.05.2026 at 10.30 Hrs.**
5. Date of opening of Financial bids will be notified to technically qualified bidders.

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-3
BSWML

DIPR/CP/365/NR/2026-27

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಇಲಾಖೆ
ಸಹಾಯಕ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಸಂರಕ್ಷಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಉಪ–ವಿಭಾಗ, ಯಾದಗಿರಿ
ಮಿಂಚಂಚೆ ವಿಳಾಸ: dfoacfsfydg@gmail.com

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಸಅಸಂ/ಯಾದ/ಮಾ.ಟೆಂಡರ್/ಸಿ.ಆರ್–01/2026–27 ದಿ:17.04.2026

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಸಂಕ್ಷಿಪ್ತ ದ್ವಿಲಕೋಟೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

(ಎರಡನೇ ಆವೃತ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮ್ಯಾನುವಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ) ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕರಿಗೆ ತಿಳಿಯಪಡಿಸುವುದೇನೆಂದರೆ 2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿಗೆ ಯಾದಗಿರಿ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಅರಣ್ಯ ವಿಭಾಗದ, ಯಾದಗಿರಿ, ಶಹಾಪೂರ ಹಾಗೂ ಸುರಪುರ ವಲಯಗಳ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ KFDF, RSP, RSPD, GUA, SFP ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿ ಸಸಿಗಳನ್ನು ಬೆಳೆಸುವ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಅನುಸೂಚಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸೂಚಿಸಿದ ಇತರೆ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ, ಎರಡನೇ ಆವೃತ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮ್ಯಾನುವಲ್ ಟೆಂಡರನ್ನು ದಿನಾಂಕ: 18/04/2006 ರಿಂದ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 24/04/2026 ವರೆಗೆ ಯಾದಗಿರಿ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಅರಣ್ಯ ವಿಭಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ 2026–27ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಾಗಿ ನೊಂದಾಯಿಸಿದ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ದಿ:27.04.2026 ರಂದು ಅಪರಾಹ್ನ 04:00ರ ನಂತರ ತೆರೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು. ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಯಶಸ್ವಿಯಾದ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ದಿ:28.04.2026 ರಂದು ಅಪರಾಹ್ನ 04:00ರ ನಂತರ ತೆರೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಕಛೇರಿ ಕೆಲಸದ ದಿನಗಳಂದು ಕಛೇರಿ ಸಮಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು ಅಥವಾ ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 08473–200731ಕ್ಕೆ ಕರೆ ಮಾಡಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ಸಹಾಯಕ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಸಂರಕ್ಷಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು,
ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಉಪ–ವಿಭಾಗ ಯಾದಗಿರಿ.

ವಾ.ಸಾ.ಸಂ.ಇ/ಯಾದಗಿರ/35/ಕೆ.ಎಸ್.ಎಂ.ಸಿ.&ಎ/2026–27

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, DAVANAGERE DIVISION, DAVANAGERE.

No.EE:PWD:Dvg/AE-3:IFT-02:2026-27/183 Dated:- 23.04.2026

SHOR TERM E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

Ref : This office tender notification No. IFT-02/2026-27 dated : 23.04.2026.

The works under Head of Account 5054-80-190-0-01-132 KRDCL, 1 work Rs. 200.00 lakhs pertaining to Honnali sub division under the Jurisdiction of PWD, Davanagere division, has been called for the tenders from registered Contractors in KPWD for the above works through KPP Portal as per standard tender documents rules.

W.I 35602:- Tender dates are as mentioned below:

(1) Last Date & time for tender queries Date 27.04.2026 Timing 4.00 P.M. **(2)** Prebid meeting held : office of Executive enginner, PWD division, Davanagere. Date : 28.04.2026 Timing 11.30 A.M. **(3)** Last Date & time for receipt of tenders Date : 06.05.2026 Timing 4.00 P.M. **(4)** Date & time for opening of Technical Bid : Date : 07.05.2026 Timing 4.30 P.M.

Further details can be obtained from this office in office hours.

DIPR/CTA/KSMCA/41/2026-27

Sd/- Executive Engineer
PWD, Davanagere.

Biz Bytes

Infosys board okays stock grants for CEO

BENGALURU, DHNS: Infosys has approved performance-based stock grants worth Rs 51.75 crore for CEO and MD Salil Parekh. The company said in a BSE filing that Parekh will receive "the grant of annual performance-based stock incentives (Annual Performance Equity Grant) in the form of RSUs, covering the company's equity shares with a market value of Rs 34.75 crore, as on date of the grant under the 2015 Stock Incentive Compensation Plan (2015 plan), which shall vest 12 months from the date of grant subject to achievement of performance targets as determined by the Board".

Salil Parekh

TCS deepens partnership with Google Cloud

BENGALURU, DHNS: TCS on Friday announced the expansion of its strategic partnership with Google Cloud to help enterprises adopt AI-native, autonomous operating models.

This partnership will support deploying and managing agentic and autonomous AI systems that enable faster decision-making across complex business and IT functions, without adding operational risk or complexity.

Groupe ADP to sell stake in GMR Airports

NEW DELHI, PTI: France's Groupe ADP is selling up to 7.3% stake in GMR Airports to the GMR promoter group for over Rs 10,100 crore. Once the deal is complete, the overall stake of Groupe ADP in GMR Airports will come down to 25% from 32.3%.

GMR Airports Ltd (GAL), the airports business of the GMR Group, operates various airports, including at Delhi and Hyderabad. The deal will be executed through an initial sale and entry into options relating to ordinary or preference shares as well as the early purchase by GMR Group of the convertible bonds issued by GAL and currently held by Groupe ADP.

Reliance Q4 net falls 12.5% as energy crisis hits core O2C biz

Jio Platforms posts 13% rise in profit in fourth quarter

NEW DELHI, PTI

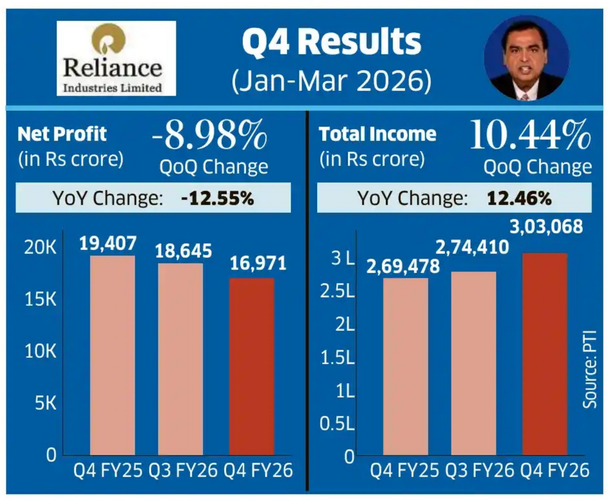
Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) on Friday reported a 12.5% decline in its March-quarter net profit, as the global energy crisis weighed on its core oil-to-chemicals business, offsetting gains in its consumer-facing telecom and retail segments.

Its net profit of Rs 16,971 crore in the January-March — the fourth and final quarter of FY2025-26 — was down from Rs 19,407 crore in the same period a year earlier, according to a statement. The profit also declined sequentially from Rs 18,645 crore recorded in the October-December 2025 quarter.

The oil-to-chemicals (O2C) business, which contributes the lion's share of revenue to the country's most-valuable company, was impacted by the war in West Asia, which triggered a sharp rise in crude prices and elevated freight, insurance, and fuel costs.

The government's reintroduction of a windfall tax on fuel exports further weighed on margins, while the company was compelled to divert valuable feedstock from petrochemical production towards manufacturing LPG to help manage domestic energy disruptions.

Profitability was also hit by a move from state-run fuel retailers to cap margins on petrol and diesel purchases from Reliance, as they sought to offset losses from a freeze in retail fuel prices. To remain competitive, Reliance similarly refrained from raising pump prices in line with the surge in crude oil costs, further pressuring margins.



The weakness in the O2C business offset double-digit revenue growth in the telecom and retail segments. The telecom business saw earnings grow from a higher subscriber base, as well as increased per-user earnings, while the hyperlocal segment of retail saw handsome order bookings.

The total income, however, rose to Rs 3.03 lakh crore in Q4, compared to Rs 2.69 lakh crore a year ago.

For the full financial year, the company posted a record net profit of Rs 80,775 crore, marking a 16% increase from Rs 69,648 crore in FY25.

EBITDA came in at Rs 48,588 crore in Q4, almost the same as last year.

Depreciation was up 10% at Rs 14,808 crore, largely on account of higher depreciation in digital services from network assets. Also, finance costs increased 7% to Rs 6,585 crore, mainly due to operationalisation of 5G spectrum assets.

For the full year, Reliance posted record high revenue of Rs 11.75 lakh crore and an all-time high EBITDA of Rs 2.07 lakh crore.

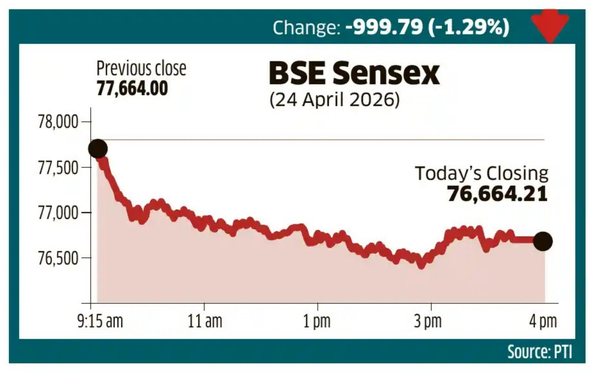
Its telecom and digital arm, Jio Platforms, posted a 13% rise in profit in Q4, as subscriber base swelled by 9.1 million to 524.4 million and per user earnings rose 3.8% to Rs 214 per month.

In retail, profit rose to Rs 3,563 crore as it opened 333 new stores during the quarter. JioMart hyper-local commerce average daily orders surged 29% QoQ and over 300% YoY.

While O2C EBITDA fell 3.7% to Rs 14,520 crore in Q4, Reliance's oil and gas production business posted an 18% drop in pre-tax profit at Rs 4,195 crore on account of lower gas price realisation.

RIL Chairman and Managing Director Mukesh Ambani said the company navigated a challenging FY26 marked by geopolitical disruptions, volatile energy prices and shifting global trade dynamics.

He noted that Reliance's diversified portfolio and strong domestic focus helped it withstand global headwinds, even as India maintained its growth momentum.



Markets slump on surging oil prices

Sensex drops 1k pts amid massive selling in IT stocks

MUMBAI, PTI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty tumbled over 1% on Friday, falling for the third consecutive day, as a sharp rally in crude prices and massive selling in IT counters weighed heavily on investor sentiment.

Unabated foreign fund outflows, a negative trend in global markets amid prolonged conflict and continued disruption in the Strait of Hormuz added to the gloom.

The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped 999.79 points, or 1.29%, to settle at 76,664.21. During the day, it plunged 1,260.13 points or 1.62% to 76,403.87. A total of 2,905 stocks declined, while 1,326 advanced and 158 remained unchanged on the BSE. The wider gauge NSE Nifty slumped 275.10 points, or 1.14%, to end at 23,897.95.

On the weekly front, the BSE benchmark tanked 1,829.33 points, or 2.33%, and the Nifty dropped 455.6 points, or 1.87%.

"Indian equity markets extended their decline for a third consecutive session, as renewed risk-off sentiment weighed on investor confidence. Ongoing tensions in the Middle East, coupled with persistent weakness in the IT sector, continued to pressure an already fragile market backdrop," Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

The BSE SmallCap Select index dropped 0.95%, and the MidCap Select index dipped 0.91%. All sectoral indices ended lower. The BSE IT tanked 5.13%, BSE Focused IT (4.65%), Healthcare (1.35%), Telecommunication (1.33 per cent), Realty (1.30%), Services (1.17%) and Consumer Discretionary (1.04%).

RBI cancels banking licence of Paytm Payments Bank

MUMBAI, PTI: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday announced the cancellation of banking licence issued to Paytm Payments Bank for non-compliance with norms, saying the affairs of the bank were conducted in a manner detrimental to the interest of its depositors.

The RBI will make an application for winding up of the bank before the high court.

The bank failed to comply with the conditions stipulated in the Payments Bank licence issued to it, the central bank said.

Paytm Payments Bank, part of Vijay Shekhar Sharma-promoted fintech firm Paytm, came under the regulatory scanner on multiple occasions earlier, including in March 2022, when the central bank barred it from onboarding new customers.

The licence was cancelled effective from the close of business hours on Friday, the RBI said, adding that Paytm Payments Bank has enough liquidity to repay its entire deposit liability upon winding up.

The RBI said the affairs of the bank were conducted in a manner detrimental to its own interests as well as its depositors.

"The general character of the management of the bank is prejudicial to the interest of depositors as also the public interest... no useful purpose or public interest would be served by allowing the bank to continue...," the RBI said in a statement.

Paytm Payments Bank was not complying with certain norms of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, it added.

According to the central bank, Paytm Payments Bank Ltd is prohibited from conducting the business of "banking" or any additional business specified under the Banking Regulation Act with immediate effect.

Paytm Payments Bank commenced operations with effect from May 23, 2017. The Reserve Bank had issued a licence to the bank to carry on the business of payments bank in the country.

The bank has been under the RBI lens over the past many years.

Meta tells staff it will cut 10% of jobs in push for efficiency

BLOOMBERG

Meta Platforms Inc plans to cut 10% of workers, or roughly 8,000 employees, in an effort to boost efficiency and offset its heavy spending on Artificial Intelligence (AI).

The company disclosed the move in a memo sent to employees on Thursday, saying the layoffs will come on May 20. Meta also won't hire workers for 6,000 open roles that it had intended to fill.

The job cuts come as Meta Founder, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Mark Zuckerberg is spending aggressively on the talent and infrastructure needed to develop artificial intelligence products, including large language models and chatbots.

Meta already projected record capital expenditures this year, and has announced several multibillion-dollar deals with AI partners over the past few months. Employees have been encouraged to use AI agents internally to help with writing code and other tasks.

Meta alluded to its AI spending in the memo, which was written by Janelle Gale, Chief People Officer. "We're doing this as part of our continued effort to run the company more efficiently and to allow us to offset the other investments we're making," she wrote in the note, which was reviewed by *Bloomberg*.

Meta Founder, Chairman and CEO Mark Zuckerberg

Industry trend?

Meta employees have spent much of the year fretting about job cuts, which already hit the Reality Labs division and other teams. Gale said that the company was announcing the layoffs early since details of the plan had already leaked. *Reuters* first reported on Meta's planned workforce reductions earlier this month.

"I know this is unwelcome news and confirming this puts everyone in an uneasy state, but we feel this is the best path forward, given the circumstances," Gale wrote.

Other big tech companies are making cuts in the face of booming AI spending. Microsoft Corp offered voluntary retirement to thousands of US employees on Thursday.

Meta had almost 79,000 employees at the start of the year. The company is scheduled to report first quarter earnings next week.

State govt to provide hiring support to new GCCs

BENGALURU, DHNS: In a step towards strengthening Karnataka's talent ecosystem and reinforcing its position as India's leading hub for Global Capability Centres (GCCs), the state government, through the Karnataka Innovation and Technology Society (KITS), Department of Electronics, IT & Biotechnology, has entered into an MoU with Naukri.com.

The partnership aims to support early-stage setup of GCCs in the state by facilitating structured access to high-quality talent solutions, with a particular focus on regions beyond Bengaluru, including Mysuru, Mangaluru, Hubballi-Dharwad-Belagavi, Kalaburagi, Tumakuru, and Shivamogga.

Priyank Kharge

Under this collaboration, Naukri.com will extend a customised GCC Starter Package to newly-established GCCs registered with KITS, offering zero-cost access for an initial period of 90 days. Electronics and IT-BT Minister Priyank Kharge said, "As GCCs increasingly evolve into centres that are innovating and building for the world, our focus is to ensure that they have the right talent and ecosystem to move up the value chain."

Rupee ends 15 paise weaker against $

MUMBAI, PTI: The rupee extended its losing streak for a fifth day, depreciating 15 paise to close at 94.16 against the US dollar on Friday due to higher crude oil prices and strengthening American currency, with prospects of West Asia peace talks hanging in the balance.

Meanwhile, the dollar index was 0.02% higher at 98.62.

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)
No: CEE/Tr(Op)Z/Bgkt/SEE(O)/AEE-8/F-2/26-27/1640-47 Date:23.04.2026
TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)

KPTCL invites tender on Electronic mode for the following works including supply of equipments / materials, erection, civil works, testing and commissioning on **Partial Turnkey basis**.

1. Bid Enquiry No: **KPTCL/CEE/TRNS/BGKT/110KV/STN-54/25-26/ 110KVSRSPHCUGC** Tender No: **KPTCL/2025-26/UC/WORK_INDENT3539/CALL-2** for Repair of punctured 110kV 240 sqmm XLPE UG Cable of 110kV SRS-PHC line near Settlement area in Hubballi City, Dharwad District in Operation Division, Hubballi - **Reserved Category: SC.**

2. Bid Enquiry No: **KPTCL/ CEE/ TRNS/ BGKT/ 110KV/ STN-33/ 25-26/ 110KVSiddapurbrkrrplcmnt** Tender No: **KPTCL/2026-27/SS/WORK_INDENT3554/CALL-2** for Replacement of 2no's of MCVCB feeders by Outdoor PCVCB feeders at 110KV SIDDAPUR SUBSTATION - **Reserved Category: SC.**

3. Bid Enquiry No: **KPTCL/CEE/TRNS/BGKT/110KV/STN-40/25-26/ 110KVKarwarbrkrrplcmnt** Tender No: **KPTCL/2026-27/SS/WORK_INDENT3555/CALL-2** for Replacement of 2 No's of MCVCB feeder by Outdoor PCVCB feeders at 110kV S/S Karwar coming under Operations Division, Sirsi - **Reserved Category: CAT-I.**

The tenders will be received through e-procurement portal only. The details regarding participation in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website:**https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink 'E Procurement KPTCL' OR **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **25.04.2026 @ 16:30 Hrs**. Any other details can be had from the office of the undersigned during office hours.

Sd/- Chief Engineer, (Electy.,)
Transmission (Operations) Zone, KPTCL,
Opp. Sector No.45, Navanagar, Bagalkot-587103

Govt. of Karnataka
Karnataka Residential Educational Institutions Society, Bengaluru
(An Organisation of Government of Karnataka)
No.8, MSB-1, 6th & 7th Floor, Karnataka Marketing Federation Building, Cunningham Road, Bengaluru-560052.
No: KREIS/EE-2/Tender-01/2026-27 Date: 24.04.2026
TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through e-Procurement Only)

The tenders have been invited for **Additional and Infrastructure works to (ST) MDRS Complex at Kundana, Devanahalli Taluk in Bengaluru Rural District in the jurisdiction of KREIS (Tender Indent No. 818)** through e-Portal vide website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on **24.04.2026**. The last date for receipt of tenders is **23.05.2026**. The details may be viewed at above website.

Note: Any changes in term tender notification will not be published in dailies. It will be published in e-Procurement portal only.

Sd/- Executive Engineer-2
KREIS
DIPR/CP/YC/342/2026-27

Government of Karnataka - Karnataka Forest Department
Assistant Conservator of Forests,
Hosanagara Sub Division, Hosanagara.
District: Shivamogga, Taluk: Hosanagara,
e-Mail ID: acfhnr@gmail.com
No: ACF/HNR/ Tender /CR-1/2026-27/7 Date: 23.04.2026
Detailed e-Tender Notice.
(e-Tender Notice Through e-Procurement Portal)

Unitwar Short-Term Tender is invited in two cover system through e-procurement portal from interested Forest Contractors having experience for implementation of Advance works towards formation of plantation and maintenance and maintenance of saplings under AOA-10, DDF-15, DDF ROOT STOCK-7, GUA-3, ECO Budget-2, MPCA-MPCA-6, NAGARAVANA-1, RSP-13 Schemes, total 57 works of Approx. total Rs. 3.26 crores in various places in the limits of various forest zones of Sagar Division for the year 2026-27. Last date for submission of Tender is fixed as: 08.05.2026 up to 5.20 PM. Complete details of works and places are explained in the e-Procurement Portal. For further information this office can be contacted and details regarding the Tender can be obtained from the official website http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

Sd/- Assistant Conservator of Forests,
Hosanagara Sub Division, Hosanagara.
DIPR/smg/ksmca/26-27/126/04/135

KARNATAKA STATE ELECTRONICS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LTD., KEONICS ISO 9001 : 2008
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprises)
No 59, 1st Floor, Kumara Park West, Railway Parallel Road, Seshadripuram, Bangalore - 560020.
No.: KSEDC/P063/2025-26 Date: 24.04.2026
E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

As per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and 2000, Karnataka State Electronics Development Corporation Limited (KEONICS), Bengaluru invites tender of 15 days through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **Request for Proposal (RFP) for Providing Outsource Vehicle with Drivers for KEONICS**. The information regarding the tender is made available in **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** For any tender related queries or more information, Bidders may contact KEONICS during office hours. (Telephone Number 080-2222 5645).

Sl. No.	Tender Notification No.	Details of Tender	Last date to submit the tender
1	KEONICS/ 2026-27/ SE0135	Request for Proposal (RFP) for Providing Outsource Vehicle with Drivers for KEONICS	08.05.2026

DIPR/CP/349/SA/2026-27
Sd/- Director (Finance)

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Karnataka Government Secretariat, Vikasa Soudha,
Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru.
NO: DOH 57 RERA 2026 Dated: 24-04-2026
NOTIFICATION

In continuation of the Notification No. DOH 57 RERA 2026, Dated: 24-03-2026, the Last Date for Submitting Application for the Post of Technical / Administrative Member in the Karnataka Real Estate Appellate Tribunal, Bengaluru, is extended to **13-05-2026 till 5.00 PM.** All other terms & conditions of the original notification remain the same.

By Order and in the name of the
Governor of Karnataka
Sd/-
(HEMAVATHI)
Under Secretary to Government,
Housing Department (RERA).
DIPR/CP/363/Adverto/2026-27

DH DECCAN HERALD
Don't Miss
Tomorrow's DH on Sunday

BIG PICTURE
Political satire: Sting in the tale.

WELLNESS
Music-based interventions for ASD.

ART & PURSUITS
The grand old Salar Jung Museum is 75.

TRAVEL
Head to the beautiful Kangra Valley.

BOOKS
Our enduring love for Jane Austen.

GENDER
How families perpetuate patriarchy.

Follow Us

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ಕುಟುಂಬ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ.
ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ಕುಟುಂಬ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಸಂಘ, ವಿಜಯನಗರ
ಇ-ಮೇಲ್:-E-Mail:rchovijayanagara@gmail.com
No:/NHM/Tender/Manpower/2/2025-26 Date:21/04/2026
E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

Department of Health and welfare Soceity, Vijayanagara District hereby invites e-tenders from Eligible and qualified agency for outsourcing of Manpower supply for various health facilities under NHM as per notificationNo:/NHM/Tender/Manpower/2/2025-26 dated 18/04/2026 for the period of 2026-27 from the office of District Health and welfare office, Vijayanagara. Contract period shall commence from the date of award of contract of this tender to 31st March-2027 with an estimated tender value Rs. 2,33,72,580/- details of the E-tender is as follows.

The tender schedule under e-procurement system is as follows

01.Date of Tender Notification: **21-04-2026 10.00am.** 02.Last date for submission of Tender documentes: **29-05-2026 11.00am.** 03.Date of submission of objections: **02-05-2026 5.30 pm.** 04.Pre Bid meeting: **04-05-2026 10.30 am.** 04.Date of opening of Technical Bid: **30-05-2026 11.30am.** 05.Date of Opening of Financial Bid: **04-06-2026 11.30am.** 06.Estimated Tender Amount: **2,33,72,580/-.** 07.EMD Amount: **4,67,452/-.** 08.Place of Tender Opening: **DHO Office Vijayanagara**

For Further information can be obtained from District RCH officer, Vijayanagar District in office hours. Mo.No:-7892724423.

Sd/-Member Secretary, District Health and Family Welfare Society, Vijayanagar District.
DIPR/Vijayanagar/2026-27/KSMCA/RO No/45

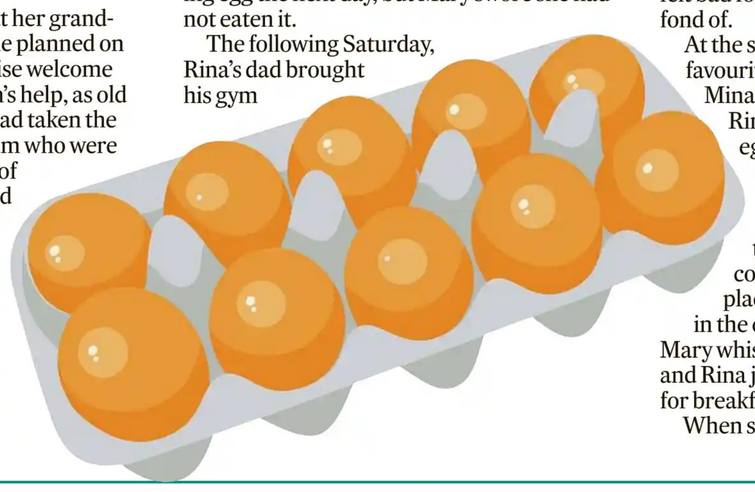
Case of the VANISHING EGGS

A kitchen mystery, a determined child, and an unlikely culprit come together in this tale by Ashrafi Antia

Rina was excited that her grandma was visiting. She planned on baking her a surprise welcome cake with her mum's help, as old Mary, their cook, had taken the day off. It was Rina and her mum who were in for a surprise, though! Both of them had checked that they had the six eggs they needed to bake the cake in the morning. Now there were only five eggs left in the wicker basket by the window.

"That's strange," exclaimed Rina's mum. "Perhaps Mary made an egg for herself before leaving, but she normally asks me before helping herself. Anyway, let's just bake a smaller cake for now and order more eggs later, as we're running out of time," she said, adjusting the measurements of flour and cocoa powder accordingly.

Dadi loved the cake, and Mum and Rina were pleased as punch when she said it was the best chocolate cake she'd had in a long time. Mum questioned Mary about the missing egg the next day, but Mary swore she had not eaten it.



The following Saturday, Rina's dad brought his gym friends home for breakfast. They all wanted omelettes. Mary popped her head out of the kitchen door, beckoning Rina's mum. When Mum entered the kitchen, Mary sheepishly told her there weren't enough eggs to go around. Mum was furious. "How many times have I told you to inform me if things are running out? Why do you wait till the last minute to let me know? Besides, I'm sure there were at least half a dozen eggs in the basket yesterday. How come there are only four today? Where are the eggs disappearing?" she questioned Mary angrily.

"I don't know, Ma," said Mary, taken aback by her accusatory tone.

Rina, who had just entered the house from the garden through the kitchen back door, overheard the conversation and immediately volunteered to run over to the neighbourhood supermarket and buy some eggs. She felt bad for Mary, whom she was rather fond of.

At the supermarket, Rina spotted her favourite chocolate eggs. Her best friend Minal was coming over the next day. Rina decided to buy two chocolate eggs in colourful foil wrappers, one red and one blue, for Minal and herself.

When she got home, Rina left the chocolate eggs on the kitchen counter by the window, while she placed the other eggs she had bought in the egg basket. Within a few minutes, Mary whisked up delicious, fluffy omelettes, and Rina joined everyone in the dining room for breakfast.

When she returned to the kitchen a couple of hours later, her eyes fell upon her chocolate egg lying on the counter, but it was just the blue one. The red one was missing. Rina thought that perhaps it had rolled off the counter onto the floor or under the table, but she couldn't find it. She opened the fridge to see if someone had put it there, but it wasn't there either.

"Have you seen my chocolate egg, Mary?" she asked.

"You left it on the counter, baby. Did you forget? And I thought I was getting old," Mary joked. "There it is, right where you left it," she said, pointing to the egg.

"Yes, but where's the other red one?" Rina asked.

"I don't know," said Mary, scratching her head.

Mum suspected that Mary was pinching the eggs and started keeping a tab on them. Sure enough, they'd find one missing every other day. Poor Mary denied taking the eggs, and Rina believed her, though Mum didn't. Rina was determined to solve the case of the disappearing eggs and prove Mary's innocence, as Mum was considering sacking her after all these years.

A few days later, when Rina was playing in the garden, something glinting in the sunlight caught her eye. Moving closer, she found it was a piece of the shiny red chocolate egg wrapper. This meant that whoever had taken her chocolate egg had eaten it in the garden. Her heart sank at the thought that maybe her mother was right and it could be Mary.

Suddenly, she heard some crows cawing raucously. She went to investigate why they were making a racket and was shocked to see a crow holding an egg in its beak. She could barely believe her eyes. She was unaware that a crow could open its beak wide enough to hold an egg.

Placing the egg on the ground, the crow pecked at it and cracked it open. And that's how Rina finally cracked the case of the disappearing eggs.

Hiding behind a tree to not scare the crow away, she took out her mobile phone and clicked a photo of the crow eating the egg, or else no one would have believed her. They would have said she was making up far-fetched stories to save Mary from getting sacked.

Thus, thanks to Rina, the real culprit was caught. The ingenious crow used to hop onto the windowsill and grab an egg from the basket through the window, which was kept open a crack for air. That crafty crow seemed to have cultivated a taste for eggs!

From then on, the eggs were kept in the fridge rather than by the window, and Mary stood exonerated of all blame, thanks to Rina solving the case of the mysteriously disappearing eggs.

2 DIY art
using bottle caps

...and other stationery items

Fish mosaic

Ingredients

- Several plastic bottle caps (in assorted colours and sizes)
- A sturdy base (cardboard sheet or thick chart paper)
- Pencil
- Strong glue or hot glue gun
- Acrylic paints
- Paintbrush
- Black marker
- Hanging hook or string

Method

- Lightly sketch a large fish on your base using a pencil. Keep it simple for easier filling.
- Arrange the bottle caps by colour. Decide which colours will go where (such as blue for background, bright colours for the fish).
- Begin gluing caps along the outline of the fish to define the shape clearly.
- Continue sticking caps inside the fish shape, while following your colour pattern. Then fill the background.
- Use contrasting colours for the eye, fins, and tail. You can also draw outlines or small details with a marker.
- Allow the glue to dry completely so the caps stay firmly in place.
- To display your artwork, attach a hook or string at the back and hang it on a wall.

Snowman keychain

Ingredients

- 2-3 white plastic bottle caps
- 1 coloured bottle cap
- Acrylic paints or sketch pens (black, orange, pink)
- Small pom-poms
- Pipe cleaner or string
- Hot or strong craft glue
- Black marker
- Paintbrush
- Keychain ring

Method

- Clean and dry the bottle caps. If they're not white, paint them white and let them dry.
- Glue two white caps vertically, one above the other, to form the head and body.
- You can add a third cap horizontally at the bottom as a base, if needed.
- On the top cap, draw eyes, a smiling mouth, and a small orange triangle for the nose. You can also use orange felt.
- Add pink circles for cheeks.
- Add pom poms as earmuffs on either side of the head. Connect them with a small strip of pipe cleaner or thread to resemble earmuffs.
- Draw buttons on the lower cap using a black marker.
- Fix a string or pipe cleaner at the back/top to create a loop.
- Attach a keychain ring if you want to use it as a keychain.
- Let it dry. Allow everything to set properly before use.

Dear Punch, much love...

Open Sesame readers write letters to the cute Internet sensation

Dear Punch,

Hello, little superstar!

My name is R. Inisha. I am 13 years old, and I live in Bengaluru. Even though we've never met, I feel like I already know you. Your tiny hands, curious eyes, and playful nature make people all over the world smile, including me!

But I have a question for you... do you know how famous you are? Or are you just being your natural, happy self without realising that you are spreading happiness everywhere?

If I could spend one day with you, I wouldn't bring toys—I think you make everything fun already! I would just sit beside you, watch you explore, and maybe share a fruit snack (don't worry, I'll let you take the bigger piece!).

Sometimes, I wonder—do you ever miss living freely in nature? Climbing real trees and feeling the fresh air? If I could, I would build you a big green jungle full of trees, sunshine, and friends like you. Because someone as lively as you deserves the biggest playground in the world.

Let me tell you about me—I love animals very much. I believe animals have feelings just like us. Watching you reminds me to be curious, playful, and happy in small moments.

Punch, you are not just a baby monkey. You are a tiny teacher who reminds us humans how to enjoy life.

Stay naughty, stay curious, and keep making the world smile.

With lots of love,
R INISHA, 13
Bengaluru, Karnataka

Dear Punch-kun,

Hello, or Konnichiwa! I am really delighted to have a chat with you. Did you know you have gone viral on social media, especially on TikTok? I am really sorrowful to hear that your mother has abandoned you, but I am also happy to know that you have made friends.

I'm a huge fan of the orange orangutan plush toy, also nicknamed by your fans as "Orange Mama" or "Oran Mother." I would also love to know whether you like fruits or green vegetables, and who your friends are and what their names are. In particular, do you like playing with your friends and caretakers, or climbing trees?

Now let me tell you about myself. I like chatting with my bestie, troubling my mother, going on adventures, and eating a variety of food. If I ever come to Japan, I will surely visit Ichikawa City Zoo, and we could talk for hours and hours and play with each other.

Lastly, I would like to tell you to stay high-spirited and keep smiling. I hope we can meet each other one day.
ARCHISHA SUNIL KAVATHEKAR, 12
Dharwad, Karnataka

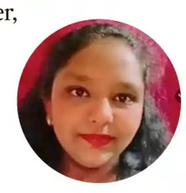
Dear Punch,

I am really glad to meet you. Let me introduce myself: I am a 12-year-old from Karnataka, and I am in the seventh grade. Now, let us get to know each other.

I came to know about you through the internet, that you were abandoned by your mother and that nobody wanted to be your friend. I also learned that Lisa from Blackpink, a very popular K-pop idol, came to visit you.

I know that you are a nine-month-old Japanese macaque and that you live in Ichikawa City Zoo in Japan.

I just want to know, how did you face all the bullying? I too would love to visit you sooner or later, Punch.



Take care and make new friends,
VENESSA WILSON, 12
Bengaluru, Karnataka

This Week:

Bard basics

Open Sesame Quiz

Take the fun Open Sesame quiz, and stand a chance to win gift vouchers worth Rs 500. Open to children below 16 years.

Q1 William Shakespeare (c. April 23, 1564 – April 23, 1616) enacted relatively minor roles in his plays. Which of them featured him as a loyal servant in the Forest of Arden?

Q2 The titular character of the play 'Othello' is warned against the 'green-eyed monster'. What emotion is the 'monster' referred to in that phrase, an expression coined by Shakespeare?

Q3 Which recent award-winning film portrays Shakespeare as a husband and father, focusing on the death of his young son, in 1596, as the inspiration for the tragedy 'Hamlet'?

Scan the QR code
Or visit bit.ly/DHopensesame to participate in the quiz.

Q4 **Rhyme Time:** Two clues to which the answers rhyme with each other.
Clue A: Over 150 poems by Shakespeare are in this verse form.
Clue B: Hat covering the ears and tied under the chin.

Q5 **Clue Cluster:** Which of Shakespeare's characters famously demands, "What's in a name?" Use these clues.
a) Capulet
b) Verona
c) Balcony
d) Nurse

WINNER'S NAMES: Shrieya S (15), Bengaluru; Bharat (13), Manipal; Toshikaa (10), Bengaluru.
ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S QUIZ: A1) Cecil Rhodes, A2) David Livingstone, A3) Swimming, A4) Lion/Scion, A5) Harare.

POETS IN THE MAKING

Want to see your poetry in print?

Send in poems on the topic 'Happy memories' to Open Sesame. You may be featured in an upcoming edition. Mail your work—not more than 12 lines—to *opensesame@deccanherald.co.in* Entries close on April 30. Open to children below 16 years. Don't forget to mention your name, age, and city. And send us a recent photograph.

LET'S DEBATE!

Want to take part in the upcoming *Open Sesame* debate? Share your thoughts in a crisp 200-word essay on the topic 'Is it better to adopt pets than buy them?' Mail your works to *opensesame@deccanherald.co.in* Entries close on May 14. Open to children below 16 years. Don't forget to mention your name, age, school, and city. And send us a recent photograph.

Word of the Week

radical

(adjective)
— wanting great social or political change

Usage:
— The new policy proposes a radical change in how public transport is managed.
— Vimuz made a radical decision to quit her job and move to the mountains.

ART CORNER

Love painting?

Want to showcase your flair for colours? Send your paintings on the theme 'Inside my mind' to *Open Sesame* and stand a chance to get featured in an upcoming edition. Mail photographs of your work to *opensesame@deccanherald.co.in* Open to children below 16 years. Don't forget to mention your name, age, and city. And send us a recent photograph of yourself. Entries close on May 7.

PIC CREDIT: SHAKEEL-UL-REHMAN

In Srinagar, gig workers navigate security stops, patchy connectivity and uncertain streets, with the city's chequered history shaping even the most routine of jobs, writes Zulfikar Majid

Checkpoints, then doorsteps

On a crisp spring morning, Srinagar is only just waking up. Shop shutters rise in uneven rhythm, a baker arranges stacks of warm girda (bread) on a wooden counter, and the faint scent of blossoms drifts across the street. A thin stream of traffic moves cautiously, as if the city is still deciding how quickly to begin the day.

Delivery agent Aijaz adjusts the strap of his faded delivery bag and checks his phone. A notification flashes. He taps the screen, glances briefly at the map and nods. "Rajbagh," he says. "Easy start." He kicks the motorcycle into motion.

In another city, that would be all there is to it — a routine beginning to a routine job. Here, it is the start of a workday shaped not only by distance and time, but by a set of conditions that rarely appear on any app: checkpoints, narrow lanes, uncertain addresses and disruptions that cannot be predicted.

For decades, Kashmir has been defined by conflict — its streets shaped as much by security deployments as by seasons, its economy constrained by cycles of disruption that limited both movement and opportunity. Work, for many, was often dictated by circumstances beyond their control. It was shaped by shutdowns, curfews and an uncertain business environment that rarely allowed consistency.

In recent years, however, a measure of relative calm has begun to alter the texture of everyday life. Markets stay open longer, public movement is more predictable, and India's steadily expanding digital economy is beginning to gain a foothold in the Valley. What was once seen as too uncertain for platform-based work is gradually being absorbed into a wider national economic network.

Yet the question that lingers is simple but unresolved: can systems built on speed, predictability and algorithmic precision function in a place where uncertainty is still a significant part of daily life?

It is within this transition — quiet but significant — that app-based delivery work has taken root in Srinagar, reshaping itself to the region's geography and history.

To understand what that looks like on the ground, I spent a day with those at the centre of this shift — delivery workers navigating a city where routine is still negotiated rather than assumed.

A job that arrived late

Gig-based delivery work came relatively late to Kashmir. While courier services have long operated in the region, app-based food delivery began gaining traction only around 2018–19, when platforms like Swiggy and Zomato expanded cautiously into Srinagar. E-commerce logistics, driven by Amazon and Flipkart, grew faster, particularly during the pandemic, when dependence on online ordering increased sharply.

Even now, the ecosystem remains different from metropolitan India. Food delivery is only one part of the system; parcels, medicines and essential goods often make up a significant share of daily orders. The pattern reflects both consumer demand and the Valley's dependence on goods sourced from outside.

There is no official consolidated dataset on gig workers in Srinagar. Local industry estimates, including inputs from delivery aggregators and ground-level supervisors, suggest the number lies between 2,000 and 4,000 workers. This remains an approximation rather than a formally verified count.

What exists, therefore, is a workforce that is visible across the city, yet statistically underrepresented.

More than just a sign-up

For workers, entering this system is not as seamless as in larger cities. In Bengaluru or Delhi, onboarding is largely digital — identity verification, licence uploads and automated background checks that are often completed within a few days.

In Srinagar, the process is slower and more layered.

Workers say that while standard documentation is required, onboarding in certain categories — particularly logistics involving inter-district movement — is often followed by police verification. The practice is not uniform, but commonly reported.

A senior police official in Srinagar, speaking on condition of anonymity, clarified that there is no blanket policy mandating verification for all delivery workers. "Depending on the nature of assignments, companies may seek verification as a precautionary step," he said.

It also remains unclear whether such verification practices are applied uniformly across platforms or are limited to certain categories, such as logistics and inter-district deliveries. Companies have not publicly clarified their policies on this aspect. This creates a system that operates in a grey zone — neither formally mandated nor absent. It is shaped instead by operational discretion and local sensitivities.

For workers, it translates to waiting. "There is more scrutiny here," Aijaz says. "You don't start quickly. Sometimes you just keep waiting for approval."

Why this work?

The reasons for entering this line of work are rarely framed in terms of choice.

Jammu and Kashmir continues to record persistently high unemployment compared to national averages. Estimates from CMIE's Consumer Pyramids Household Survey and the Periodic Labour Force Survey indicate that unemployment in the region has remained in double digits in recent years, and has at times crossed 20 per cent depending on methodology and reference period.

At the same time, official Labour and Employment Department records show over 3.5 lakh educated youth registered with employment exchanges. While this reflects administrative data rather than real-time unemployment, it points to a large pool of job seekers struggling to find opportunities.

The gap between education and employment is visible in everyday decisions.

Aijaz, a graduate, spent years preparing for government exams before turning to delivery work. Danish, another worker, alternates between parcel delivery and food orders depending on demand.

"Here, you take what you get," Aijaz says.

Unlike in metro cities, where gig work often supplements income, in Srinagar, it frequently becomes the primary livelihood. It offers relatively immediate entry but little long-term security.

The economic contrast with cities like Bengaluru is striking. In metros, higher-order density and structured incentive systems allow workers to complete more deliveries and earn more per shift. Daily earnings can range from Rs 800 to Rs 1,500 depending on peak hours, bonuses and surge pricing.

In cities like Bengaluru, structured incentive systems include peak-hour bonuses, surge pricing, and per-order boosts. This significantly enhances earnings during high-demand periods. Workers in Srinagar say such incentives are either limited or inconsistent, reducing their ability to increase income through longer working hours alone. Fuel prices, however, remain largely comparable, further narrowing real earnings.

In Srinagar, workers describe a more constrained system. Orders are fewer, distances longer and incentives limited. Daily earnings typically fall between Rs 500 and Rs 700 before fuel costs, leaving narrow margins once expenses are deducted. While housing costs may be lower than in larger cities, other essentials — fuel, groceries and maintenance — remain comparable, reducing the advantage. "We don't have those extra benefits," Danish says. "There are no big bonuses. It is just work."

The easy city

As we move through the city, the gap between digital systems and physical realities becomes more visible. The first delivery in the posh uptown area of Rajbagh is smooth — clear address, wide roads, minimal delay. For a brief moment, Srinagar resembles any other city where gig work functions seamlessly.

But this predictability is fragile. By afternoon, we enter the old city, where navigation becomes an exercise in interpretation rather than precision. The address reads: "Near masjid." There are several. Aijaz calls the customer. Directions are given in fragments — left after the shop, right near the lane, ask someone if needed. We circle once, then again, before stopping to ask a passerby.

In cities like Bengaluru, digital addressing has reduced such uncertainty. Here, delivery still relies heavily on human knowledge. "This is normal," Aijaz says. The delay does not register fully in the system. But it shapes the experience.

Cautious approach

Further ahead, another layer of reality comes into view. As we approach a checkpoint, Aijaz slows instinctively, long before being signalled. A soldier gestures for us to stop. The bag is checked, and IDs are glanced at. Sometimes, workers say, vehicles are inspected as well.

Such checks were more frequent in earlier years. Workers say their intensity and frequency have reduced, reflecting what they describe as an improvement in the overall security situation. But unpredictability remains.

On some days, it is a quick pass. On others, it takes time.

Workers say delays caused by such checks are not always factored into delivery timelines, and can sometimes affect ratings or future order allocation. "Customers don't know what happens here," Aijaz says. "They just see the delay."

Repeated delays — regardless of cause — can affect customer ratings, which in turn influence future order allocation. There is no clear mechanism to account for security-related disruptions within the system. Safety remains an underlying concern. Workers say they avoid late-night deliveries in certain areas due to uncertainty. Some mention occasional questioning at checkpoints or discomfort during inspections, though such interactions are usually brief.

While workers interviewed did not report frequent serious incidents, they pointed to underlying risks — ranging from navigating poorly lit areas at night to concerns about theft, road accidents or confrontations during tense situations. The absence of formal safety assurances or insurance awareness adds to this uncertainty. "You learn which areas to avoid, which times to work," Danish says.

Fragile earnings

Aijaz completes around 15 to 20 deliveries on a good day. The income leaves little room for savings.

"There are no big incentives," Danish says. "And if there is a shutdown, you earn nothing." He recalls a day when a sudden security operation halted movement. Roads were blocked without warning. He waited for nearly two hours before the order was cancelled. "No payment," he says. In such moments, the fragility of the system becomes evident. When movement stops, income stops instantly.

Between empathy and friction

Some customers are considerate, especially during winter, offering tea or asking workers to rest for a moment. Others are less patient.

Delays — whether caused by traffic, navigation or security checks — can lead to cancellations, refusals or arguments. "Some are kind, some are not," Aijaz says. "Both exist." Across this landscape, one absence is striking.

There are virtually no women delivery workers in Srinagar. Workers and local observers cite mobility constraints, safety concerns and prevailing social norms as key barriers. Platforms have not introduced visible initiatives to address this gap.

Internet shutdowns

During Internet shutdowns or service disruptions, app-based delivery work stops entirely. Orders freeze, navigation fails, and earnings disappear. Workers say there is no compensation mechanism during such periods. "If the Internet is gone, the work is gone," Danish says.

In recent years, platforms like Swiggy, Zomato and Amazon have expanded cautiously in the Valley, responding to improving conditions and growing demand. But how they are adapting to the region's unique operational challenges — ranging from security checks to connectivity disruptions — remains unclear. There is no publicly available framework outlining how onboarding timelines, verification practices or compensation policies are calibrated for conflict-affected areas such as Kashmir.

What exists instead is an informal adjustment — workers adapting themselves to a system that does not formally adapt to them. Whether this model is sustainable in the long term remains an open question. As gig work expands into regions with distinct operational constraints, the absence of clearly defined safeguards raises questions about how resilient such systems can be without local adaptation.

As evening settles over Srinagar, the city slows again. The light softens, traffic thins, and the rhythm of deliveries begins to taper off. Aijaz checks his phone one last time. No new orders.

The day ends much like it began — not with certainty, but with adjustment. Gig work in Srinagar exists in a space between structure and uncertainty. It is enabled by technology, but shaped by terrain, history and conditions that resist standardisation.

For now, Srinagar moves forward — one delivery at a time.

Like this story?
Email: dhonsat@deccanherald.co.in

SATURDAY MAILBOX

Responses are pouring in for 'The Saturday Story'. The selection has been edited for brevity and clarity

A war correspondent recounts her experience covering conflict in Afghanistan in 'Reporting from the frontlines'. (March 28)

'Gripping'

It was gripping and clearly outlined the hazards involved in war reporting. Kanika Gupta's daring and courage should serve as an inspiration for all journalists.
- C V Aravind

'Brave reporter'

Salute to the brave war zone reporters and their families. Truly, they are our modern-day freedom fighters.
- Seema Nachankar

'Rare feat'

One must have guts to be a war correspondent. It is rare to see women in this field. May Kanika Gupta's tribe increase!
- Odiyanda K Muthappa

In 'A doctor who waited for hornbills', a physician shares his journey of developing a green patch that attracts 30 bird species in Shivamogga. (April 4)

'Enthralling read'

As a physician myself, it's enthralling to read about how an entire new world opened up to someone in my profession.
- Anita Borwanker Gupta

'Government support'

Dr Rathnakar is doing a wonderful job by attracting many species, especially hornbills which are almost extinct. He needs support from the government and NGOs to save bird species.
- Suresh Narasipur

'Patience pays off'

Dr Rathnakar has meticulously documented hornbills and their routine by feeding and keenly observing them. He is lucky to have seen 21 hornbills at once. Patience pays off.
- Omkar Gurusiddappa Kotre

'Heartwarming'

It was most heartwarming to read the article about how Dr Rathnakar went about cultivating a garden for hornbills and other birds.
- Padma Sachidanand

A journalist meets a modern-day matchmaker in 'When dating coaches play cupid'. (April 11)

'Timely piece'

The way you explored the space between arranged marriage setups and dating apps, along with their pros and cons, felt very relevant for today. What stood out was your perspective as a journalism graduate — balanced and grounded. A thoughtful and timely piece.
- Anand Mestru

A DH journalist spends a day in Mysuru Central Prison in 'Inside a prison, a reform check'. (April 18)

'I was a prisoner'

Please accept my congratulations on your excellent, educational story. Let us appreciate the positive steps being taken, such as literary classes. I too was a prisoner. When I asked a simple question to the President of France, I was thrown into prison in Paris. In four days, I was thrown out of the country.
- E P Menon, peace activist

DALIT NARRATIVES

Beyond the stereotype lens

Tamil cinema has excelled in the portrayal of Dalit life in mainstream films but there still are some gaps, critics tell

Pranati A S

Rene from 'Natchathiram Nagargiradhu' was criticised for being inorganic.

Yogi Babu's 'Mandela' offers a satirical take on caste politics.

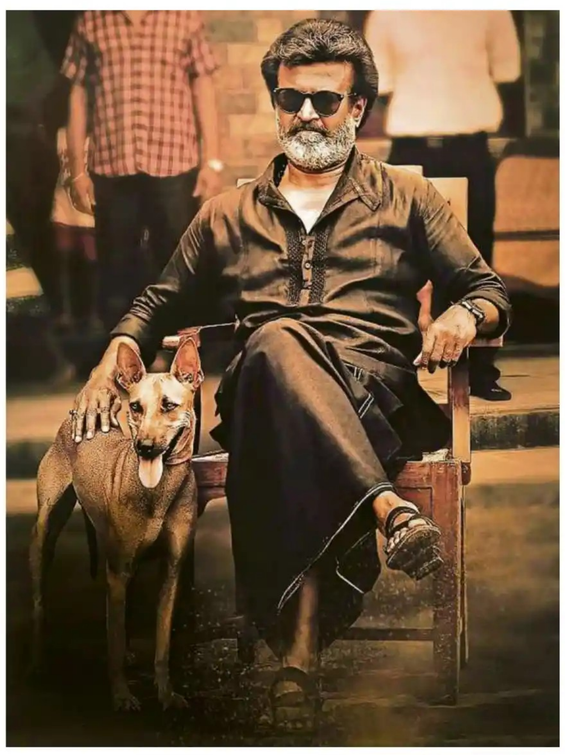
Social exclusion was rarely explored in mainstream cinema beyond tokenistic mockery, often reduced to accents, dialects or superficial markers of difference. In recent years, however, a shift has emerged, with filmmakers bringing anti-caste narratives into the mainstream, confronting marginalisation and untouchability more directly.

Filmmakers like Pa Ranjith and Nagaraj Manjule have redefined the grammar of Dalit representation. Films like 'Madras' (2014) and 'Sairat' (2016) were among the early works to showcase both structural inequality and the everyday textures of Dalit life.

Similarly, Vetrimaaran's 'Asuran', 'Visaranai' and 'Viduthalai' show caste-based violence and police brutality, while Mari Selvaraj's 'Pariyerum Perumal' offers a deeply nuanced portrayal of the Dalit experience. Bollywood is slowly shifting towards portraying Dalit lives through movies like 'Masaan' and 'Dhadak 2'.

However, despite the shift, the portrayals remain incomplete. Dalit protagonists are often reduced to victims, agents of revenge or figures defined solely by socio-political struggle.

Rajinikanth's character in 'Kaala' challenges stereotypical assumptions about Dalits' way of life.



Media narratives

One of the first trans woman producers, Zena Sagar who comes from Dalit background, believes Dalit narratives in cinema remain overly symbolic and reinforce long-standing media stereotypes — depicting Dalits as being humble, extremely marginalised, unskilled, and subservient to the systems, and denied access to the fullness of citizenship.

She adds that this influence stems from how media, mainstream narratives have depicted Dalit lives. "This stereotyping limits the imagination of Dalit life and culture. It is important to showcase the daily habits, joys and intimacies, to create more accurate and empowering representations," she says.

Although authorship has shifted to Dalit practitioners in recent years, Zena believes it remains largely limited to only a few filmmakers.

Films like 'Aarakshan' and 'Article 15' were criticised for weak representation of Dalits, often portraying them as submissive characters, reducing Dalit agency and perpetuating an upper caste saviour narrative.

Stereotypes

Although Dalit life in cinema entered mainstream cinematic focus only about 15 years ago, the persistence of stereotypes is jarring.

"A character has to always be multidimensional in any creative form, but we most often see only two-dimensional characters when it comes to showing Dalits on screen," says Lakshman K P, theatre practitioner and co-founder of the Ambedkarite art collective Jangama.

Karikaalan in 'Kaala' is a beautiful portrayal, he says. The character embodies wholeness. He is an activist, but also someone who plays cricket with children, shares meals, and inhabits five-star hotels with ease, thus breaking assumptions about what Dalit life looks like.

In 'Pariyerum Perumal', the boy's father is another striking portrayal — a performer shaped by irony, more feminine than the mother.

Wholesomeness of Dalit literature

Revenge and violence, or submission, are often presented as the only responses in Dalit narratives. But in real life, many possibilities can be found, he says.

He cites Devanuru Mahadeva's 'Kusumabaale'. When Garesidda Maava is caught stealing about 16 coconuts, he says it isn't wrong if he was simply quenching his thirst. When asked if he can drink so many, he says yes. Taken aback, the owners, initially planning to fine him, back off, realising his desperation.

Quoting this, Lakshman says, ideas of justice emerge from lived experiences. Films often frame Dalit characters through dominant-caste morality, which differs sharply from Dalit ways of seeing the world. The agency Dalit characters possess in literature is missing in cinema, he says, citing Saakavva's character from 'Odalala' as another example. She says, If Yama comes, I will tell him this: life in hell cannot be harder than the struggles and hardships I have faced in this earthly world. "The characters have agency, a worldview, a stand and autonomy. This autonomy is lacking in cinema, and that is when the stereotyping of characters and narratives begins," Lakshman shares.

Senior journalist S R Ramakrishna, who has translated Dalit poet Siddlingaiah's autobiography 'Ooru Keri' into English (A Word with You, World), says filmmakers looking to portray Dalit life could explore the wealth of Dalit writing in Kannada. "Siddalingaiah's real-life accounts show a zest for life in the face of adversity," he says. "They can be adapted into films — perhaps Kavitha Lankesh could direct them, with Jaggesh in the lead."

Imagination and cinema as hope

Film scholar N Manu Chakravarthy says, "In the last scene of 'Pariyerum Perumal', the upper-caste girl's father is compelled to admit that there will come a time when we must acknowledge that the tyranny of the caste system cannot go on. The boy in the film is attacked and beaten — the portrayal of violence on Dalits is not an ideological position; it is a lived reality. But there is a futuristic vision when the father says he will have to accept the new reality." Filmmakers should not thrust Ambedkar into narratives, but work out his vision through experiential realities — because he did not carry an ideological position; he emerged from lived experiences, he adds.

In 'Kaala', Lakshman says, Rajinikanth's character is soft, even feminine — friendly with children, sometimes vulnerable, yet assertive.

Madonne Ashwin's 'Mandela', starring Yogi Babu offers a satirical take on caste politics. The film does not rely on violence to depict empowerment; instead, the protagonist asserts dignity and identity by calling himself, Mandela. While some critics found the ending too optimistic compared to the realities of caste, isn't art meant to imagine what is possible?

We need more films like 'Pariyerum Perumal' and its Hindi adaptation 'Dhadak 2', says Dalit thinker and teacher Dayananda Kavi. Films, he argues, should highlight evolving possibilities to transcend caste and build relationships — without romanticising these narratives.

Women narratives

In 'Captain Miller', Shakuntala tells Velmathi that women are subservient irrespective of whether they are from the upper caste or the lower caste. Even in films about Dalit lives and struggles, women often remain on the margins, their experiences overshadowed by narratives driven by male anger, resistance, and assertion.

Dalit cinema is still exploring the idea of Dalit feminism. While Rene in Ranjith's 'Natchathiram Nagargiradhu' (2022) appears as a strong self-assertive figure, her character drew criticism. Vijayashanthi Murthy, who teaches at St Joseph's College of Commerce, calls her portrayal inorganic and preachy, resembling an archetype rather than a fully realised character. "Rene's character also came from a male gaze of what liberation could be," she notes.

Vijayashanthi connects more with Selvi's character in 'Kaala'. "Selvi is bold; she is not shown as meek or somebody who needs the agency or support of a Dalit man," she adds.

Leena Manimekalai's 'Maadathy' also offers a rare, intimate portrayal of a Dalit woman from the Puthirai Vannaar caste considered 'Dalits among Dalits'.

FEEDBACK
Send your ideas and comments to dhonsat @deccanherald.co.in

Missing Dalit gaze

Zena believes that representing Dalits in films does little to bring real change. "Representation is a farce idea — it means nothing without ecosystem and structural change. Decisions about who operates the camera, who gets cast, and which films receive funding are all shaped by various factors influenced by market, class, caste and geography, limiting imagination and diversity in storytelling, she says, adding "We also need long term-capacity building programmes to enable structural change."

The soil must be fertile — only then can everything grow. The film industry needs to create a thriving environment for more authentic stories to emerge — more people with lived experience need to be part of the industry.

Shastri Ramachandaran fondly remembers meeting the stalwart in Chennai during a period of unrest. Yesterday was the actor's birthday

Close encounter with Rajkumar

Rajkumar. DH FILE PHOTO

This season of recollections and reflections on one of the greatest Kannada cultural icons, Rajkumar, brings to mind an occasion when I met him about 44 years ago. When I was working with *DH* in Chennai, I was tasked with getting his reaction to incidents of violence against Tamils and Tamil Nadu during a Kannada language agitation.

The Editor had told me that the purpose was not to provoke him to say something that would worsen the raging agitation in Karnataka, but to focus on what he says that perhaps could calm tensions.

After hearing a lot about the formidable Rajkumar from my colleagues in Chennai, I was in even more awe of the star. I had made it my duty to see some of his films and read up on him, because his hold on the public mind made him more than a film star.

It was with trepidation that I set out to meet him for his comments on the issue. He was in Madras for a film shoot, along with actor Jayaprada. Anti-Tamil violence was raging in KGF. I expected a fire-breathing linguistic chauvinist, and was apprehensive about how we would communicate: I knew no Kannada then, and he was not comfortable in English. Would he speak in Tamil?

I was disarmed the moment we met on the sets and shook hands. Rajkumar spoke softly, in Tamil: "We have nothing against Tamils or Tamil Nadu; any (violent) incidents are unfortunate, not intended." His message was that those fighting for Kannada should not resort to violence. It was a very brief interview.

In many films, the first sight of Rajkumar is a glimpse of his feet. In life as in films, the evergreen Kannada matinee idol stood firmly on his feet; steadfast, never swayed by passing political winds. His politics was his love of the Kannada language. His passion was to ensure that its primacy prevailed in Karnataka, and he led many campaigns for Kannada.

Rajkumar was a rare phenomenon. His mammoth fan following swelled with the release of each of his over 200 films, in a career spanning over 50 years. As a screen phenomenon, he had no peer, perhaps except MGR, though the latter was more of a totemic fetish despite being a product of the cultural politics of the Dravidian movement. Yet, in a general sense, Rajkumar, along with MGR, belonged to a firmament of film stars the like of which may never be seen again. NTR too had a place in this universe, for these were cultural icons defined by the multitudes they moved.

Rajkumar has played every conceivable role in his films, and barring the early few, every one of them was a runaway success. The surging crowds to see his film would build up days before they were released, and rare was the occasion when on the opening day, the theatre did not announce 'House Full for the Week'. People often cycled from distant towns and villages to see his films on the first day, if not the first week. Some would shell out a whole month's salary — running to several hundred rupees — to buy a ticket in 'black'.

Such was Rajkumar's hold on the popular mind in Karnataka.

MOVIE R|E|V|I|E|W|S

Smooth criminal? Not quite

AMOGH RAVINDRA

Biopics usually come with built-in rhythm, especially when the subject is someone like Michael Jackson. With Antoine Fuqua at the helm, known for hard-hitting dramas like Training Day and Southpaw, there is an expectation of weight and emotion. Instead, 'Michael' struggles to find its pitch, never quite hitting the high notes it aims for.

The film unfolds like a Wikipedia page, covering everything from Michael's early life to his 1988 UK tour, and everything in between. It moves point to point without rhythm or buildup, ticking off milestones rather than shaping a story. Moments that should feel defining come and go without impact, making the narrative feel flat and distant. Rather than drawing one into the journey, it plays like a supercut of key events with BTS, never quite settling long enough to say something meaningful.

Jaafar Jackson is the film's strongest element, capturing his uncle's physicality and presence with convincing ease. Followed by Colman Domingo as Joseph Jackson. The rest of the ensemble feels oddly cast, with performances that never quite fit. The casting choices raise questions, and at times even the prosthetics fail to convince. Technically, the film remains serviceable but unremarkable. The sequences blur together, lacking emotional weight or distinction. The music does much of the heavy lifting, but that strength belongs to Michael Jackson's legacy rather than the film itself.

★★☆☆☆

Michael
English (Theatres)
Director: Antoine Fuqua
Cast: Jaafar Jackson, Nia Long, Colman Domingo

In the end, 'Michael' feels like a missed opportunity. A story this iconic needed more soul, risk, and impact. For a film about the King of Pop, this one didn't quite "rock my world".

Michael Jackson's nephew Jaafar plays the pop star in the biopic.

Slick saga but tired subplots

LASYA SHASHIMOHAN

Vijay Varma in 'Matka King'.

★★★★½

Matka King
Hindi (Amazon Prime Video)
Director: Nagraj Manjule
Cast: Vijay Varma, Siddharth Jadhav, Kritika Kamra

In the world of rigged gambling, a humble employee breaks free. Brij Bhatti (Vijay Varma) introduces multiple playing formats of a game that gains popularity as "Matka" (Pot). Brij's spotless ethics and city-wide network make him mind-bogglingly rich overnight. Dagdu Vichare (Siddharth Jadhav) remains Brij's strongest pillar of support through most of his journey. Brij enlists the help of Gulrukh (Kritika Kamra), a widowed socialite, to popularise Matka among the elite. The two eventually start an affair, which strains his relationship with his wife, Barkha (Sai Tamhankar).

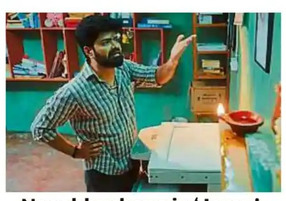
The pacing is generally steady but sags in parts. The subplots, clichéd and uninteresting, are the weak links. They involve a dedicated police officer and a determined journalist who wish to put an end to gambling. Add a brother's betrayal, a wrongly imprisoned woman, and a bloodthirsty gangster to the mix, and the contrived chaos is complete. However, the character arcs do evolve.

Brij, though not corrupted, transforms from a messiah of the poor into a man interested in power plays and vulgar displays of wealth. One crucial question lingers throughout: Is he a saint or a devil? The dialogues are enjoyable, and the direction is slick. The depiction of 1970s Mumbai is both authentic and atmospheric.

Vijay Varma puts in a solid performance as Brij Bhatti. Siddharth Jadhav is particularly impressive as the loyal Dagdu. Kritika Kamra, Sai Tamhankar and Jamie Lever shine in their roles. The chemistry between Brij and Gulrukh is electric.

Quirky premise, weak execution

PRANATI A S



Nagabhushana in 'Jerax'.

★★½☆☆

Jerax
Kannada (Zee5)
Director: Srinidhi Bengaluru
Cast: Nagabhushana, Payal Chengappa, Manju Pavagada, Srivatsa

'Jerax' is a photocopier machine that can print human clones. Srinidhi Bengaluru, who made the acclaimed sci-fi musical 'Blink', offers this innovative supernatural concept in his OTT debut. But it is largely a wasted opportunity.

Prakasha (Nagabhushana) runs a photocopying centre in Rayadurga. An outdated photocopier machine starts producing human clones. All that he has to do is get a photo of the person, and the machine will readily produce a clone. When a curious Prakasha produces a clone of his girlfriend to spy on her, things go wrong. He is forced to produce more such clones, to set things right.

Srinidhi indeed sets up an interesting premise with bizarre, quirky situations that elicit a few chuckles. While the series is quite enjoyable until the third episode, it soon becomes hampered by a predictable, repetitive narrative loop in which each new clone creates a problem that is resolved in almost the same way.

Set in the middle of the local election campaign, the six-episode series has satirical takes on elections, politicians and a certain party with a flower symbol. A politician is also excited about producing clones who can vote for him. The idea of manufacturing voters in today's 'vote-chori' politics is a biting reference, but with so much going on, everything seems to get lost in the chaos.

While the performances are engaging, Nagabhushana comes across as histrionic and tries too hard to be funny.

Bob Odenkirk plays a cop.

Action-comedy plays too safe

RITWIK KAIKINI

In 'Normal' (directed by Ben Wheatley), Bob Odenkirk plays Ulysses, a man with a grey past who takes up a temporary Sheriff's job in the quaint little town of Normal, Minnesota. While riding around town with his overenthusiastic deputy, Ulysses senses something askew with this 'normal town' looking like a Truman Show setup of pawns. He speaks to his wife Penny through voice notes, just like special agent Dale Cooper in 'Twin Peaks' (1990). The only humane people are a couple with a dog who try to steal a bank and uncover something that's bigger than they ever imagined. Curious about the previous Sheriff's death, Ulysses senses a tension brewing with the townspeople, including his fellow officers. Thus unfolds a comedy-action film with the Yakuza showing up to protect their hidden cache of contraband.

The film takes its time to acclimatise us with the town's eerie aloofness with a well-crafted rhythm. The deputy sheriff's leather jacket keeps making a sound, a motif for the restlessness of a secret keeper. The silence of the intense winter is felt in the long shots of the car moving through dense snow-laden landscape like a feverish reverie of Fargo (1996).

Gathering suspense till the interval, the movie fizzles out predictably. Derek Kolstad's script plays it too safe with a very lukewarm climax. Some of the dialogue falls flat with cringe humour. What triumphs is the lush sound design, the minimalist background score and a stellar performance by Bob Odenkirk. With Odenkirk's acting template as the aged, laidback, morally uplifting grey protagonist starting to wear off, a reinvention is necessary. The film tries too hard to defy a mainstream grammar of comedy but loses its effect as the predictable overpowers the experimental.

★★★☆☆

Normal
English (Theatres)
Director: Ben Wheatley
Cast: Bob Odenkirk, Lena Headey, Henry Winkler

MASTER PICKS

Uski Roti (1969)
Uski Roti depicts the realities of Indian rural women through the life of Balo, wife of a bus driver, who has to walk a long distance every afternoon to deliver lunch to her husband; while he lives his life gambling and in the company of other women.
Prime Video/ NFDC

Ashadh Ka Ek Din (1971)
The film follows Sanskrit poet Kalidas's emotional separation after he leaves his lover Mallika and his Himalayan life for Ujjaini to pursue his desire to be a great poet.
Prime Video/ NFDC

Duvidha (1973)
Based on a Rajasthani folktale, Duvidha explores female identity and desire, through the story of a young bride who is left alone by her merchant husband and is seduced by a ghost.
Prime Video/ NFDC

From one of Kaul's most popular films, 'Duvidha'.

Satah Se Uthata Aadmi (1980)
An essay film, based on the stories of renowned litterateur Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh, depicts the inner conflict, moral disillusionment, and socio-political frustration of an intellectual.
YouTube

Nazar (1991)
A tale of detachment and longing, Nazar follows a middle-aged antique dealer, who recalls his marriage to a 17-year-old orphan girl, trying to process what led to her suicide.
Prime Video/NFDC

Idiot (1992)
An adaptation of Fyodor Dostoevsky's 'The Idiot', a soldier's epilepsy is mistaken for idiocy. The film is one of Shah Rukh Khan's early performances.
YouTube

"If we play our best cricket, we have a great chance, but the confidence, the focus, the discipline has to be there for the next seven games.

MAHELA JAYAWARDENE, MI HEAD COACH

IN BRIEF

Guru HC, Blur Star HC in final

▸ Guru Hockey Club and Blue Star Hockey Club will clash in the final of the KSHA A Division Hockey League Championship after posting contrasting wins in their respective semifinal encounters on Friday, reports DHNS.

Results (semifinals): Guru Hockey Club: 3 (Sandeep 27th, 57th, Surya 54th) bt Bangalore United Hockey Club: 1 (Muthu Kumar 30th); Blue Star Hockey Club: 2 (Poovanna 25th, Karthik 27th) bt Bombers Hockey Club: 1 (Ganapathi 20th).

Arti powers Parikrma

▸ Arti Munda scored a brace as Parikrma FC hammered Reds United FC 7-0 in the KSFA A Division League Championships at the Bangalore Football Stadium on Friday, reports DHNS from Bengaluru.

Results: Parikrma FC: 7 (Arti Munda 8th, 34th, Sonam Dutta 22nd, Rasiga M 26th, Rivka Smiti Aarons 31st, Larisac R 43rd, Riya Anthony 55th) bt Reds United FC: 0; YBEFC: 0 drew with Kemp Juniors: 0.

Abhay marches into quarters

▸ India's Abhay Singh registered a notable win over Egyptian world No 13 Aly Abou Eleinen to enter his maiden PSA Gold-level event quarterfinals at the Grasshopper Cup squash in Zurich, reports AP from New Delhi.

World No. 24 Abhay trailed 5-8 in the opening game before recovering to beat the seventh seed 12-10, 11-9 in the second round.

Defending champ Alcaraz out of French Open

MADRID, AFP: Two-time reigning French Open champion Carlos Alcaraz **(in pic)** said on Friday he will not play at this year's tournament as he recovers from a wrist injury.

"We have decided that the most prudent thing to do is to be cautious and not participate in Rome or Roland Garros," Alcaraz said on social media.

"It's a complicated moment for me, but I'm sure we'll come out stronger from this," the Spaniard added, saying that he and his team would monitor his recovery before deciding when and where he would return.

Alcaraz sustained the injury during the first round of the Barcelona Open last week, where he beat Otto Virtanen but subsequently pulled out of the tournament.

The 22-year-old announced his withdrawal from the Madrid Masters on April 17, increasing concerns over whether he would be able to appear at the French Open.

RCB ace a high-speed chase

Kohli, Padikkal smash half-centuries as Challengers down GT by 5 wickets

MADHU JAWALI
BENGALURU, DHNS

Royal Challengers Bengaluru's Virat Kohli (left) and Devdutt Padikkal forged a 115-run stand for the second wicket to power the hosts to a resounding win over Gujarat Titans at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium on Friday. DH PHOTOS/ BK JANARDHAN

Virat Kohli was dropped on zero by Washington Sundar off the first ball he faced. The veteran batter went on to punish Gujarat Titans with a vintage knock (81, 44b, 8x4, 4x6) as Royal Challengers Bengaluru bounced back in style in their final league match at home. Chasing Gujarat Titans' 205/3, the hosts posted a five-wicket win to take their points tally to 10 from seven matches while rising to the second position on the points table.

Jacob Bethell, who replaced an injured Phil Salt in the XI, couldn't recreate his compatriot's magic but Kohli, along with a magnificent Devdutt Padikkal (55, 27b, 2x4, 6x6) all but shut the game with a 115-run stand for the second wicket that came off just 59 balls. The left-right combination treated seasoned campaigners like Rashid Khan and Kagiso Rabada with utter disdain as they peppered the Chinnaswamy Stadium pickets with fours and sixes.

On a day when batters from either side competed as much for style as substance, it was the RCB batters who had the last laugh. Titans' Sai Sudharsan had lit up the stadium with a sublime century in the first half of the match. The home batters went one better with a relentless assault in the first 10 overs when they raced 118/1. With this knock, Kohli reached 328 runs for the season while taking the Orange Cap from Abhishek Sharma of Sunrisers Hyderabad.

The chase, which was moving along smoothly, suddenly stuttered for a while when RCB slipped to 173 for five from a comfortable 154 for 3. But Tim David (10 n.o.) and Krunal Pandya (23 n.o.) ensured there were no needless hiccups, reaching 206/5 in 18.5 overs. Equal credit should go to RCB bowlers who produced a brilliant death-over turnaround as Gujarat Titans could manage only 35 runs in the last four overs, despite scoring 18 runs in the final over by Krunal. While Titans' eventual total of 205 for three in 20 overs wasn't to be taken lightly, it was much less than what they threatened to post when they were cruising at 170/2 at the end of the 16th over.

While the first three overs, during which the RCB bowlers kept the Titans' batters in check, suggested it could be another difficult wicket to bat, Sudharsan (100, 58b, 11x4, 5x6), batted away any such fears, with a stunning counter-attack that was as attractive as it was substantive. With his third century in the Indian Premier League, Sudharsan ended his four-match lean patch with a stunning knock even as Shubman Gill (32, 24b, 2x4, 1x6), looked more than happy to hand most of the strike to his opening partner as Titans bounced back in style with the bat following a dismal show in their last match against Mumbai in Ahmedabad where they were shot out for 100.

Sudharsan's first four came off an edge of the bowling of Bhuvneshwar Kumar but there was hardly any edginess for the rest of his stint during which he displayed the range of shots he could play. He was at equal ease in both steering the ball to third man fence and cutting the next to backward point. He could pull and punch with great comfort while scoops and ramps left RCB bowlers scratching their heads.

The innings, however, was overshadowed by Padikkal-Kohli show, a fitting end to their league campaign in front of their faithful.

SCORE BOARD

GUJARAT TITANS: Sai Sudharsan c & b Hazlewood 100 (58b, 11x4, 5x6), Shubman Gill c Padikkal b Suyash 32 (24b, 2x4, 1x6), Jos Buttler c Hazlewood b Bhuvneshwar 25 (16b, 2x4, 1x6), Washington Sundar (not out) 19 (12b, 1x4, 1x6), Jason Holder (not out) 23 (10b, 1x4, 2x6). Extras (LB-3, W-3) 6. **TOTAL (for 3 wkts, 20 overs) 205.**

Fall of wickets: 1-128 (Gill), 2-160 (Sudharsan), 3-177 (Buttler).

Bowling: Bhuvneshwar Kumar 4-0-31-1, Josh Hazlewood 4-0-40-1 (w-1), Rasikh Dar 3-0-28-0, Krunal Pandya 4-0-50-0 (w-1), Romario Shepherd 1-0-17-0, Suyash Sharma 4-0-36-1 (w-1).

ROYAL CHALLENGERS BENGALURU: Jacob Bethell c Shahrukh b Siraj 14 (10b, 3x4), Virat Kohli b Holder 81 (44b, 8x4, 4x6), Devdutt Padikkal b Rashid 55 (27b, 2x4, 6x6), Rajat Patidar c Washington b Suthar 8 (5b, 1x6), Jitesh Sharma c Suthar b Rashid 10 (6b, 1x4, 1x6), Tim David (not out) 10 (9b, 1x6), Krunal Pandya (not out) 23 (12b, 3x4, 1x6). Extras (LB-2, W-3) 5. **TOTAL (for 5 wkts, 18.5 overs) 206.**

Fall of wickets: 1-26 (Bethell), 2-141 (Padikkal), 3-154 (Kohli), 4-171 (Jitesh), 5-173 (Patidar).

Bowling: Mohammed Siraj 3-0-25-1, Kagiso Rabada 4-0-45-0 (w-1), Jason Holder 3.5-0-35-1 (w-1), Prasidh Krishna 2-0-31-0, Rashid Khan 4-0-49-2 (w-1), Manav Suthar 2-0-19-1.

Result: RCB won by 5 wickets

PoM: Virat Kohli

RCB's next match: Vs Delhi Capitals (April 27, Delhi)

Patchy Delhi face well-oiled Punjab

Last season's runners-up eye another big win

NEW DELHI, PTI

Punjab Kings' Shreyas Iyer will be looking to extend his good form when they take on Delhi Captials. PTI

LIVE 3:30 PM

Delhi Capitals will have to play out of their skins to get their stuttering campaign back on track when they face high-flying Punjab Kings in the Indian Premier League here on Saturday.

It will be a daunting task for the struggling Delhi outfit -- smarting from a comprehensive 47-run defeat to Sunrisers Hyderabad -- to stand up to a Punjab side that has been firing on all cylinders this season.

With three wins and as many losses from six matches, the Capitals find themselves pushed down the bottom half of the table in sixth place.

In contrast, Punjab Kings remain the only unbeaten team in the competition so far, sitting pretty at the top of the standings with 11 points from six outings. The sole point they lost was due to their game being washed out against Kolkata Knight Riders at Eden Gardens.

Delhi's biggest concern has been their inconsistent batting. While the likes of KL Rahul, David Miller, Tristan Stubbs and Sameer Rizvi have all contributed in patches, the unit has failed to click collectively.

Opener Pathum Nissanka, despite getting starts, has been unable to convert them into substantial scores, leaving the middle order with too much to do.

Captain Axar Patel, too, would want to shoulder greater responsibility with the bat. The all-rounder is also under scrutiny for some questionable tactical calls in the previous game.

Against a rampaging Abhishek Sharma, Axar persisted with part-time off-spinner Nitish Rana, who proved ineffective, while frontline options such as himself and Kuldeep Yadav were not utilised enough.

The absence of a clear Plan B highlighted Delhi's lack of adaptability under pressure.

POINTS TABLE

Team	Played	Won	Lost	NR	Pts	NRR
Punjab Kings	6	5	0	1	11	1.420
Royal Challengers	7	5	2	0	10	1.101
Rajasthan Royals	7	5	2	0	10	0.790
Sunrisers Hyderabad	7	4	3	0	8	0.820
Chennai Super Kings	7	3	4	0	6	0.118
Delhi Capitals	6	3	3	0	6	-0.130
Gujarat Titans	7	3	4	0	6	-0.790
Mumbai Indians	7	2	5	0	4	-0.736
Lucknow Super Giants	7	2	5	0	4	-1.277
Kolkata Knight Riders	7	1	5	1	3	-0.879

RR banking on home comfort

JAIPUR, PTI

Riyan Parag, who has had poor batting returns in the competition so far, will hope for a better showing. AFP

LIVE 7:30 PM

Rajasthan Royals would want to assert their dominance at home and settle old scores when they host Sunrisers Hyderabad in what promises to be a high-stakes Indian Premier League game here on Saturday, with both sides eyeing crucial points.

Revenge could be on RR's mind, having been outplayed by SRH in their first-leg match on April 13, when Praful Hinge headlined a 57-run drubbing with a performance that has become part of IPL lore now.

RR have since then done well, including notching a 40-run win over Lucknow Super Giants away on Wednesday, and are currently placed second in the pecking order.

SRH, who have already had their share of ups and downs this season due to inconsistency, are occupying the fourth spot, and they know the home team will come at them all guns blazing at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium.

Whether it was controlling the start, the middle overs, or closing out at the death, RR were found wanting in almost every department in the most recent meeting between the two sides, and they will see this fixture as the perfect opportunity to come up with a befitting response, especially in phases where they faltered last time.

There is no doubt that there is a clear subplot of unfinished business in the game as far as RR are concerned, even as SRH bank on their attacking top-order batters to fire and set the tone for the visitors.

SRH's aggressive template worked for them the last time, with the likes of Ishan Kishan and Heinrich Klaasen doing the job with the bat.

Fresh from his blazing hundred against Delhi Capitals, Abhishek Sharma will be keen to continue in the same vein, even as Travis Head too looks for some quick runs at the top.

SRH boast one of the most explosive batting units in the tournament, with their top three striking at a high rate.

Although Hinge and Sakib Hussain both grabbed four wickets on their IPL debut against RR, the SRH bowling unit is relatively inexperienced and has struggled in the absence of skipper Pat Cummins.

Shambhavi, Divyanshu clinch mixed team air rifle gold

CAIRO, PTI: Shooters Shambhavi Kshirsagar and Divyanshu Dewangan clinched the 10m air rifle mixed team gold with a world record score of 499.9 as India claimed its fourth gold in the ISSF Junior World Cup here on Friday.

The pair had earlier topped the qualification round with a combined 632.0. Chinese Taipei's Tsai Chieh-Ying and Chen You-An won silver with 498.3 while the French pairing of Tifenn Pomes and Gaspard Lesieur won bronze with 434.4.

India now have 12 medals from the Cairo Junior World Cup and lead the medal tally with four gold, five silver and three bronze medals with two days of the competition left and six gold medals to be decided.

India submits EOI to host 2038 Asian Games

NEW DELHI, PTI

India has officially submitted its expression of interest to host the 2038 Asian Games, a top official of the national Olympic body said, marking a significant step in the country's broader strategy to become a global hub for major multi-sporting events.

The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has recently submitted its Expression of Interest (EOI) to host the 2038 Games to the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA). The continental Olympic body discussed India's EOI at its executive board meeting on April 21 in the Chinese city of Sanya, where the Asian Beach Games began from April 22.

"Yes, we have submitted an EOI and it was discussed by the OCA in its executive board meeting," IOA CEO Raghuram Iyer **(in pic)** said.

India will host the 2030 Commonwealth Games in Ahmedabad which is also the proposed city for the country's 2036 Olympics bid. The Gujarat city could yet again be a strong candidate to host the 2038 Asian Games, if the country wins the bid.

"It's only an Expression of Interest (as of) now. They (OCA) had an initial discussion and they will tell us what to do going ahead," Iyer said.

Saudi Arabian capital Riyadh will host the 2030 Asian Games while Doha, Qatar, will stage the 2034 edition of the sporting extravaganza. Both the 2030 and 2034 editions of the Asian Games were awarded together in 2020 by the OCA.

Abhay, Nipam crowned fastest athletes

BENGALURU, DHNS: Abhay Singh and Nipam blazed through the men's and women's 100m races, respectively, to win gold on the opening day of the 24th National Junior U20 Federation Athletics Competition in Tumakuru on Friday.

Results: Men: 100m: Abhay Singh (Reliance, 10.41sec) 1; Yuvraj Singh (J&K, 10.523s) 2; Anshu Rajak (UP, 10.524s) 3. **5000m:** Dinesh Dinesh (UP, 14:36.50) 1; Ravi Yadav (Chg, 14:37.25) 2; Gurpreet Kamboj (Pun, 14:37.29) 3.

Women: 100m: Nipam (UP, 11.53sec) 1; Bhavana G (TN, 11.87s) 2; Kajal Hirabhai Vaja (Guj, 11.88s) 3. **5000m:** Muskan (Har, 16:42.88) 1; Sonam Parmar (IOCL, 16:47.89) 2; Sakshi Bhandari (Mah, 17:04.93) 3. **Discus Throw:** Amanat Kamboj (Pun, 52.27m) 1; Riddhi (Har, 48.92m) 2; Supriya Attri (NCOE Patiala, 48.07m) 3. **Pole Vault:** B Sowndharya (TN, 3.60m) 1; Chuki Birda (Raj, 3.40m) 2; Shruti Rathaur (MP, 3.40m) 3.

Hithaishree on a roll

BENGALURU, DHNS: Hithaishree L Rajaiah scored dominating wins to reach both the women's and under-19 girls' singles finals at the Yonex-Sunrise Vivek Karan Memorial Karnataka State Junior U-19 & Senior Ranking Badminton tournament at the Karnataka Badminton Association on Friday.

LOCAL BADMINTON

Results (semifinals, prefix denotes seedings): Men: Rudra Shahi bt 11-Pravararchith Rudrakshala Matam 21-13, 21-16; 10-Harshad Shadish bt Abhishek KK 9-21, 21-9, 21-16. **Under-19 boys:** 5-Kaushik Reddy Veeram Reddy bt Dhyan Santosh 17-21, 21-8, 21-12; Harshad Shadish bt Sai Pushkar 21-15, 21-9. **Women:** Hithaishree L Rajaiah bt Mahitha Naidu Surisetty 21-12, 21-13; Tanya Hemanth bt 8-Sameeksha HN 21-19, 21-11. **U-19 girls:** Disha Santosh bt 1-Nidhi Atmaram 21-12, 19-21, 21-19; Hithaishree L Rajaiah bt 7-Aashi Das 21-12, 21-18.

Jr coach White keen on building team-first mentality

HITA PRAKASH
BENGALURU, DHNS

Newly appointed junior women's hockey team coach Tim White wants his players to express themselves freely on the field.

The junior national women's camp has the current 40 best hockey-playing girls from the nook and cranny of the country gathered at the Sports Authority of India in Bengaluru. For each youngster in the training programme, mostly in their teens, it is more than just developing an elite-level skillset. The camp will also lean heavily on building a 'team first' mentality by utilising every individual's unique personality.

That is the foundation on which Tim White, the newly appointed head coach of the junior Indian women's hockey team, wants to build a world-class squad on.

"At the moment I have 40 players. I've never coached a group this big. So it is challenging," the Australian, who coached the Belgium under-21 women's team before arriving in India, tells *DH*.

"The good part is that the girls are so grateful (for the opportunity), and they really want to learn. And even though I'm an English-speaking male from another part of the world, there's already a very good connection between the group and me," offers White, who replaced former India international Tushar Khandekar for the role over a fortnight ago.

White believes in being a coach who connects with the players as people for bringing idiosyncrasies together to achieve a common goal.

"The first thing is I want everyone in the group to feel comfortable and express themselves freely. I don't want 20 robots all the same. I want them to show their personalities. I want every player who's here to make sure that they continually understand what they're good at.

"Along with this, it's about playing 'team first' hockey. When they step onto the pitch, it's about thinking 'How can I help others be better?'. What I've seen from this Indian group, so far, is that they are caring. They do look after each other. I'm confident that they will want to play for each other."

One of the key components to achieve such an ideal case scenario, which is easier said than done, is good communication among players and coaching staff, both on and off the field. Without denying the fact, White emphasises that communication isn't always only about bridging language barriers.

"Let's say they are a few quieter ones in the group. They're not as boisterous as some of the others and I don't want to be a coach who changes that. I think, we have to value one's individuality. And we need to recognise that even though this person is quieter and just goes about her business, she has strengths that other people don't have," explains the Aussie.

White says his focus is on making 'attacking play with strong defence' as the team's identity. But how does he describe this?

"A lot of young people think that the more important part of the game is when they have the ball. But if we can be an aggressive pressing team when we don't have the ball, be in good shape, good structure and then look to win the balls and manipulate opposition teams, for me, that's aggressive. That's actually dictating play. Then, what does one do when we do win the ball? It's very important we become a good transition team."

Another aspect the experienced coach stresses is working closely with senior women's head coach Sjoerd Marijne and making it a collaborative effort for the overall development of women's hockey.

"I would not want to come here if the junior team is on one island and the senior team's on another. I'll forever be learning as a coach. So I'll learn from Sjoerd. I'm also going to keep a close watch on the sub-juniors (under-18)."

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

IPL: Delhi Capitals vs Punjab Kings **(3:30 pm)**, Rajasthan Royals vs Sunrisers Hyderabad **(7:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**

4th Women's T20I: South Africa vs India **(9:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Khel, JioHotstar.**

FOOTBALL

EPL: Fulham vs Aston Villa **(5:00 pm)**, Liverpool vs Crystal Palace, West Ham United vs Everton, Wolves vs Tottenham **(all, 7:30 pm)**, Arsenal vs Newcastle **(10:00 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network.**

La Liga: Deportivo Alaves vs Mallorca **(5:30 pm)**, Getafe vs Barcelona **(7:45 pm)**, Valencia vs Girona **(10:00 pm)**. **LIVE** on **FanCode.**

ISL: Bengaluru FC vs Mumbai City FC **(5:00 pm)**, Jamshedpur FC vs Chennaiyin FC **(7:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network, FanCode.**

BADMINTON

Thomas & Uber Cup Finals: Group Stage **(3:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Select 2, JioHotstar.**

Agarwalla claims silver medal at CDI Hagen

NEW DELHI, PTI: Indian equestrian Anush Agarwalla delivered an outstanding performance at the CDI Hagen, one of Europe's most esteemed international dressage competitions, securing a second-place finish with a score of 70.94 per cent aboard his accomplished mare, Floriana, in Hagen, Germany.

The result marks another landmark achievement in the young Indian rider's rapidly ascending international career.

Agarwalla and Floriana produced a polished and expressive test that impressed the panel of international judges.

The pair's harmony, technical precision, and artistic presentation earned them a score of 70.94 per cent, placing them firmly on the podium in second position.

Chelangat, Kibet eye top honours

BENGALURU, DHNS: Defending champion Sarah Chelangat and Harbert Kibet are optimistic about making an Ugandan double in the 18th edition of the TCS World 10K here on Sunday.

"I am feeling fully fit when compared to last year. I won the 2025 title despite a back injury. I recovered fast and am ready to clock a better time to retain my crown," Sarah said.

Earlier this year, Kibet won the 10K in the Spanish town of Castellon with a fantastic time of 26:39, which is almost a minute faster than the Bengaluru World 10K event record for men, and that puts him as a hot favourite to capture the men's title this year.

BADMINTON THOMAS & UBER CUP

Men off the blocks in a blaze

Ayush shines in 4-1 win over Canada; Women lose 3-2

HORSENS (DENMARK), PTI

Lakshya Sen endured a tough loss but Ayush Shetty and the doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty registered wins as 2022 champions India notched up a commanding 4-1 win over Canada in their opening Group A tie of the Thomas Cup Finals here on Friday.

However, there was disappointment in store in the women's section as India lost 2-3 to hosts Denmark in their opening Group A tie of the Uber Cup Finals.

After Lakshya's spirited effort ended in a 18-21, 21-19, 21-10 loss to world No. 13 Victor Lai, world No. 4 Satwik and Chirag levelled the tie with a dominant 21-10, 21-11 win over Jonathan Bing Tsan Lai and Kevin Lee. The 20-year-old Ayush, runner-up at the recent Asia Championships, then outwitted world No. 33 Brian Yang 21-13, 21-17 in 39 minutes to hand India a 2-1 lead.

The second doubles pair of Hariharan Amsakarunan and M R Arjun sealed the tie for India with a convincing 21-7, 21-15 victory over Ty Alexander Lindeman and Nyl Yakura.

Kidambi Srikanth then outsmarted world No. 77 Joshua Nguyen 21-17, 21-12 in the inconsequential fifth match as India wrapped up the match 4-1 to be placed second in the table behind China.

China, 11-time winners and defending champions, beat Australia 5-0.

The top two teams from each of the four groups will qualify for the quarterfinals.

"Really happy with the way we played today, although we were down 0-1, we're happy that we could get a point for the team and make it 1-0. We don't want to keep so many expectations; we just want to enjoy as much as possible. It's a long tournament, we have three days break now. There are new people who have come in, they are young and everyone is in good spirit," Satwik told reporters.

India's Ayush Shetty scored an impressive win over world No. 33 Brian Yang of Canada in the Thomas Cup in Horsens, Denmark, on Friday. AFP FILE PHOTO

In Uber Cup, India lost 2-3 with hosts Denmark in their opening tie of Group A.

Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu put India ahead with a tough 21-13, 18-21, 21-17 win over Denmark's world No. 21 Line Christophersen.

World No. 3 Unnati Hooda then produced a late fightback and saved multiple match points before going down 12-21, 23-25 against world No. 26 Line Hojmark Kjaersfeldt, who won a silver medal at the 2026 European Badminton Championships early this month.

Tanvi Sharma went down to Amalie Schulz 21-19, 16-21, 16-21 in a 54-minute contest after taking the opening game as India trailed 1-2.

In their must win rubber, the women's doubles pair of Shruti Mishra and Priya Konjengbam missed two match points before losing the decider to Amalie Cecilie Kudsk and Mette Werge 17-21, 21-11, 21-23 in a one hour and 15-minute battle.

Sreenithi Chowdary

Sreenithi, Aadhithiya win

BENGALURU, DHNS: Qualifier Sreenithi Chowdary of Karnataka capped her fine run in the championship by claiming the women's singles title in the TNR Memorial AITA Rs 1 lakh prize money tennis tournament conducted by Topspin Tennis Academy here on Friday.

In the women's singles final, Sreenithi defeated top seed Hridayeshi 6-3, 6-2. Sreenithi collected Rs 12,500 as prize money.

M Aadhithiya from Tamil Nadu bagged the men's singles title with the hard fought 7-5, 3-6, 6-2 over qualifier Gandharv G of Karnataka.

Results (finals): Men's singles: Aadhithiya bt Gandharv Gaurav 7-5, 3-6, 6-2.
Women's singles: Sreenithi Chowdary bt Hridayeshi B Pai 6-3, 6-2.

Kreeda Kshetra emerge champs

BENGALURU, DHNS: Pavandeep R Bharadakane and Vedant Sehgal scored a half-century each as Kreeda Kshetra trounced Max Muller by 94 runs to emerge champions of the Tiger Cup under-14 cricket tournament at the Samprasiddhi Sports Estadio here on Friday.

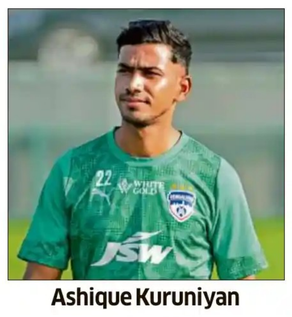
Having posted 198 all out on the back of contributions from Pavandeep (89) and Vedant (54), Kreeda Kshetra restricted Max Muller to 104/7 in 30 overs. Panav Chawla was the pick of the bowlers with figures of 2/36.

Brief scores: Kreeda Kshetra: 198 all out in 30 overs (Pavandeep R Bharadakane 89, Vedant Sehgal 54; Pratham S Kulkarni 3-29, Ronit M 2-25, Karan Shrikant 2-39) bt Max Muller: 104/7 in 30 overs (Sparsh Suresh 30; Panav Chawla 2-36).

BFC's title hopes on the edge

Munoz's men host Mumbai City in crucial contest

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS



Ashique Kuruniyan

LIVE 5:00 PM

Bengaluru FC are set to host Mumbai City FC in a crucial Indian Super League fixture at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium on Saturday, with both sides looking to strengthen their position in the title race.

For the hosts, however, title hopes are fast fading. Three weeks since Pep Munoz took charge, the Spanish coach has managed just two matches in this period for no victories in return despite taking the upper hand in them. This included a high-scoring 3-3 draw against East Bengal FC after taking the lead thrice.

These unfavourable outcomes left them trailing by five points to league leaders Mohun Bagan. Bengaluru FC still remain in the title race with four matches left, though their fate now hinges on delivering almost flawless performances from here on.

However, the bigger concern lies in their schedule, with only one remaining home fixture, and that too against a formidable Mumbai City. Adding to the pressure is Bengaluru's inconsistency at home, although there have been signs of improvement in their attacking play in recent matches.

With 41-year-old captain Sunil Chhetri back in the starting line-up, wide forwards Ashique Kuruniyan and Ryan Williams have looked sharp, making a noticeable impact with their performances. The trio has been consistently among the goals, including a breathtaking strike by Ashique and a stunning zero-angle finish by Ryan in the last game.

However, a lack of squad depth and a leaky defence, having conceded five goals in the last two matches, have dented their title ambitions. While Pep has backed his squad, it is evident that the BFC bench, though talented, is still far from the finished product. This was clearly visible in their last two matches, where crucial goals were conceded in the second half.

Mumbai City FC, on the other hand, will look to capitalise on these weaknesses as they aim to reclaim the top spot in the table. However, they too have concerns to address as the team has failed to win their last two away matches, including a 0-2 loss to FC Goa. These results have pushed them down to second place, two points behind Mohun Bagan, making this fixture crucial to avoid further setbacks.

Unlike BFC, MCFC boast strong squad depth. Under coach Petr Kratky, the team appears well-equipped in all departments. Players such as Lallinzuala Chhangte, Vikram Pratap Singh, Phurba Lachenpa, Akash Mishra, and Brandon Fernandes provide solid domestic strength, while overseas stars Joni Kauko, Jorge Ortiz, and Jorge Pereyra Diaz add finesse.

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DH DECCAN HERALD **Wknd.**

Party **Time**

Garden call

The summer is a great time to host get-togethers at home for family and friends. A dinner or late evening high tea in the garden is an option in this season. If your garden has the space to set up a barbeque and bar counter, there isn't a better place for old memories and warm conversation among close friends.

PICK THE TIME

While a garden lunch is definitely out of question in this weather, a late evening tea or dinner can be a great weekend get-together at home. Pick the time based on the location of your garden - how much sunlight does it receive? You don't want your guests sweating and uncomfortable. Dinner is a better option if your garden is west-facing.

Early intervention is crucial in treating autism

Gunasheela Surgical and Maternity Hospital's Managing Director **Dr Devika Gunasheela** and Consultant Neurodevelopmental Paediatrician **Dr Prafulla Srinivas** explain why early intervention makes a huge difference to children with autism

Gunasheela Axon Child Development Centre

For many parents, the first instinct when something feels 'slightly off' in a child's development is 'wait and watch'. But in neurodevelopment, time is not neutral, it is decisive. Early detection and intervention are crucial in any neurodevelopmental disorder.

From birth to two years, the brain grows from about 25 per cent to nearly 75 per cent of its development. This is the fastest phase of brain growth, and also the most important window to intervene. By the age of six, nearly 90 per cent of brain development is complete. Within this, speech, language and communication are the key areas affected in autism. The peak development of speech, language and communication happens between birth and three years. Missing this window can mean losing the brain's natural ability to adapt and compensate.

'Wait and watch' is not just passive, it is risky. The effect of delay does not automatically correct. In fact, the brain may lose the ability to acquire those skills later.

If autistic, when the child reaches two years of age, response when called, eye contact, use of simple words such as Mama and meaningful gestures such as waving will be inconsistent. The child tends to play alone, and the playing will be repetitive and restricted.

At a specialised child development centre, the focus shifts from illness to development. Unlike a routine clinic visit, children are observed in natural play and interaction settings, allowing clinicians to assess real-time social, communication and behavioural cues. This becomes critical in identifying early signs of autism, especially in children as young as two years.

GUNASHEELA AXON CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

Intervention at this stage is not rigid or clinical. It is deeply personalised and play-based. Parents are trained to understand subtle cues, initiate meaningful interaction and build communication through everyday activities. Therapies such as speech and occupational therapy are introduced based on the child's current abilities and gradually scaled to age-appropriate milestones.

Neuroplasticity is at its peak in the early years. With the right experiences, the brain can rewire itself to compensate for missed functions. That is the science behind early intervention.

Equally important is preparing parents before challenges arise. At Gunasheela Surgical and Maternity Hospital, families are introduced to milestone tracking and early stimulation even before discharge after delivery, enabling them to recognise concerns early and seek timely support.

On the genetic front, while autism is known to have a significant genetic component, pre-natal detection remains complex. Current genetic tests can rule out several conditions, but autism itself cannot be definitively diagnosed before birth yet.

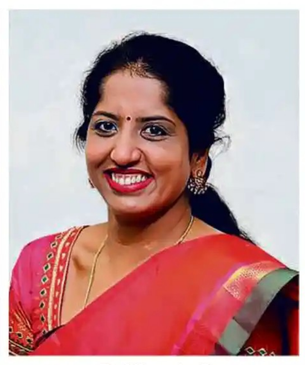
Child development cannot be approached in isolation. When families are supported from pre-pregnancy through early childhood, we are not just treating delays, we are building long-term developmental outcomes.

The message is simple, yet urgent. When in doubt, act early. Because in the developing brain, the right intervention at the right time doesn't just help, but it can transform a child's future in the best possible way.

Adaptive DBS surgery at Aster CMI Hospital is a game-changer

The robot-assisted adaptive DBS surgery enhances precision in placing electrodes resulting in far better outcomes for patients with Parkinson's Disease. **Dr Ravi Gopal Varma**, Director - Aster Global Institute of Neurosciences & Lead Consultant, Neurosurgery; **Aster CMI Hospital**'s Senior Consultant – Neurosurgery **Dr Nirmala S** and Consultant Neurologist and Movement Disorders Specialist **Dr Praveen Sharma P**, explain how this procedure makes a difference

Dr Ravi Gopal Varma



Dr Nirmala S

Dr Praveen Sharma P

Parkinson's Disease is a neuro condition that makes it hard to control movements. It develops when the brain produces less-than-required dopamine, a chemical needed for smooth and steady motion. In simple terms, this means the body doesn't move as easily as it should. People with Parkinson's Disease may notice a slight tremor in their hands, stiffness in their muscles or that they are moving more slowly than before.

Over time, everyday activities such as walking, writing and even speaking can become more difficult.

The condition usually develops slowly and is more common in older adults, though it can appear earlier. While there is no cure yet, treatments and therapies can help manage the symptoms and improve quality of life, allowing people with the disease to continue with their daily routines for years.

Deep brain stimulation

One of the latest treatments include the deep brain stimulation (DBS) surgery. The surgeon places very thin wires, called electrodes, into specific areas of the brain that control movement. These are connected to a small battery device, a pulse generator not unlike a pacemaker, implanted in the chest, which sends gentle electrical signals to help counter abnormal brain activity. It is done to reduce symptoms such as tremors, stiffness and slow movement. While DBS surgery is not a cure, it can make everyday activities much easier for patients.

Adaptive deep brain stimulation

Today, there is an advanced form of DBS surgery - adaptive deep brain stimulation (adaptive DBS) which adjusts stimulation in real time based on the brain's activity. Like the standard DBS, it involves placing electrodes in the brain and a device in the chest but instead of sending constant signals, adaptive DBS 'listens' to the brain and automatically changes the level of stimulation as symptoms fluctuate. This makes treatment more precise, reduces side effects and improve symptom control throughout the day.

Usually, after DBS surgery, the patient has to visit the surgeon frequently to get the programming done. However, those who have gone in for the adaptive DBS surgery need to visit their doctor less frequently because the software takes care of the programming to a large extent.

Precision is the key

The success of an adaptive DBS surgery is hinged on the precision achieved in placing the electrodes. To facilitate a high degree of success, Aster CMI Hospital is among the first across India to have acquired a robotic system that assists in adaptive DBS surgery.

This helps the neurosurgeons here place electrodes in the brain with extremely high precision. The robot guides the surgeon using detailed brain scans and real-time navigation. While the conventional DBS surgery required the patient to wear a frame on the head with the coordinates, the robot-aided surgery is frameless.

The technology also makes the procedure more consistent and efficient, often shortening surgery time and minimising human error. As adaptive DBS adjusts stimulation in real time based on brain activity, combining it with robotic accuracy makes more personalised treatment possible, better targeting of affected brain areas and, in many cases, quicker recovery and improved overall outcomes.

Eligibility for adaptive DBS surgery

As in the case of conventional DBS surgery, a patient has to qualify to be able to undergo adaptive DBS surgery

Here are some parameters to me met:

- The patient should have been on medications for Parkinson's Disease for more than five years
- The efficacy of the medications has reduced
- The side effects of the medication have been severe
- The patient should have been responding well to the medication
- The patient should not have major memory or behavioural issues
- While age is not an issue, those over 75 years may qualify for the adaptive DBS surgery only if above parameters are met

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Stay safe in the sun

Are you out in the harsh summer sun every day and worried about sunburn? Dermatologist **Dr Mukta Sachdev** has some advice that will help you prevent it

Summer **care**

Bengaluru is currently in the grip of a prolonged dry heat spell, with rising temperatures and little respite from rain. Coinciding with school holidays and summer travel, this has led to a noticeable increase in sun-related skin concerns. Families are spending more time outdoors -whether for sports, camps or vacations - often underestimating the intensity of ultraviolet (UV) exposure.

It is important to recognise that sunburn is not limited to coastal settings. Even in Bengaluru, cumulative UV exposure - particularly between late morning and mid-afternoon - can lead to significant skin damage. Sunburn is an acute inflammatory response to UVB radiation, resulting in cellular injury, barrier disruption, and, in some cases, longer-term pigmentary changes.

Hydration is the key

A key, often overlooked, factor in prevention and recovery is adequate hydration. In hot, dry conditions, trans-epidermal water loss increases, leaving the skin more susceptible to irritation and delayed healing. Ensuring consistent fluid intake - water, oral rehydration solutions, coconut water or buttermilk - is essential, particularly for children engaged in outdoor activities during school holidays. Well-hydrated skin is better-equipped to maintain its barrier function and recover from environmental stress.

Sunscreen is not negotiable

Photoprotection must be systematic and consistent. The cornerstone is the use of a broad-spectrum sunscreen (protecting against both UVA and UVB rays) with SPF 30 or higher. SPF 50 is preferable in current conditions. Sunscreen should be applied liberally (approximately two mg for every square cm of skin) 20 minutes before exposure to the sun, and reapplied every 2–3 hours or sooner with sweating.

Equally important are physical protective measures - wide-brimmed hat, UV-protective sunglasses and tightly-woven, breathable clothing that prevents exposure to the sun. Outdoor activities should not be scheduled in peak UV hours (11 am to 3 pm).

Signs of sunburn

Clinical features of sunburn vary by severity. Early signs include erythema, warmth and tenderness. Some may report a burning or stinging sensation. Moderate cases can involve oedema and increased sensitivity, while severe sunburn may present with blistering, desquamation and systemic symptoms such as fatigue or low-grade fever. In individuals with darker skin, erythema may be less apparent, but discomfort and subsequent hyperpigmentation are common.

Management is largely supportive and aimed at reducing inflammation and restoring the skin barrier.

Initial care includes cooling the skin with lukewarm compresses or showers - extreme cold should be avoided to prevent further tissue injury. Topical application of bland emollients or aloe vera–based preparations can provide symptomatic relief. Calamine lotion helps reduce irritation.

Hydration - both topical and systemic - is critical during recovery. In cases with significant discomfort, short-term use of oral anti-inflammatory medication may be considered under medical guidance. Extensive blistering, severe pain or systemic symptoms warrant prompt dermatological evaluation.

Practical dos and don'ts

Dos:

- Maintain regular fluid intake throughout the day
- Apply and reapply sunscreen adequately
- Use gentle, fragrance-free moisturisers
- Wear protective clothing while outdoors

Don'ts:

- Do not rupture blisters as they serve as a natural barrier
- Avoid harsh topical agents, exfoliants or home remedies
- Do not apply ice directly on the skin
- Avoid exposure to the sun until the skin has healed

With increased outdoor activity during school holidays and travel, awareness and preventive care become even more important. Protection from the sun should be viewed not as an occasional measure, but as a daily dermatological necessity.

Simple interventions - particularly consistent sunscreen use and adequate hydration - reduce the risk of sunburn and its long-term consequences significantly.

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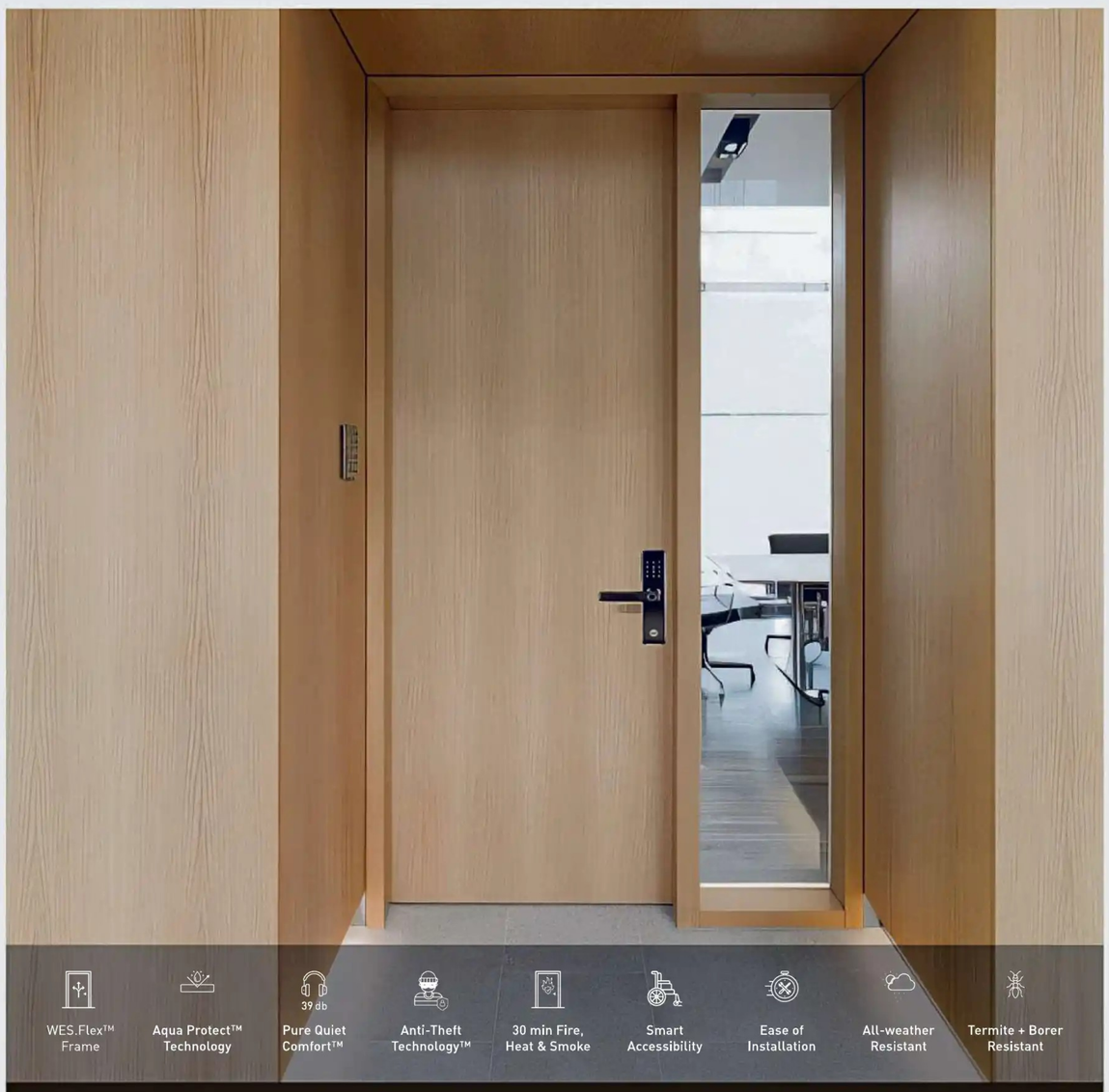

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Wknd. DELIGHT

Half your lunch box should ideally be filled with veggies. They give you the vitamins and fibre you need and don't add excess calories

EAT RIGHT

WEEKEND LIFESTYLE FEATURE

GO FOR BALANCED MEALS

Get your lunch box to support your dietary needs. Make a weekly menu that is both interesting and gives you the nutrition you need. Choose whole wheat and brown rice. Limit sugar. Ensure your lunch gives you a daily dose of proteins, vitamins and healthy fats. Pack in a different fruit every day and some nuts for those mid-day hunger pangs.

VEGGIES FOR HYDRATION

Summer is a time for extra hydration. Choose veggies such as cucumber and tomato that adds to your hydration from fluids. It's a great idea to pack cucumber sticks and a citrus fruit along with lunch to be had as a snack in between meals. Buttermilk is a better option than sugary drinks.

What's FOR LUNCH today?

A well-planned lunch box packs in more than just a meal. It helps you cultivate healthy eating and mindful living, writes **Swatee Jog**

When Gargee Hiremath switched jobs from a tech major at Hosur where four exotic meals at the office was the norm to a company where there was none, she was in for a shock. That meant she had to carry her meals with her. She bought some nice colourful steel lunch boxes and glass containers, a sipper and an insulated bag that boosted her morale. Now she carries her meals to office to last from 8 am to 8 pm. The humble office lunch box has quietly undergone a transformation, thanks to health conscious employees who work long hours. What was once just one mid-day meal, has now come to include 2-3 more small munches in between. What people carry to work is no longer just food but a thoughtful extension of how they live and work.

This format not only looks appealing but also encourages mindful eating and portion control.

Eating beyond one meal

Vaishali Karlekar is a 40-year-old Ayurvedic medical practitioner in Bengaluru who travels a long distance daily for work. Instead of one heavy lunch, she carries multiple small meals throughout the day. "I carry many small boxes and a bottle, all neatly tucked inside a square bag", she says.

Apart from her vegetables and rotis, she carries mid-morning fruits, evening nuts, granola bar, large box of salad, aam panna and cooked ragi porridge or fresh juice. "These additions help me maintain my energy level and reduce unhealthy cravings. They also ensure a balanced nutritious food plan", she adds.

The lunch bag has evolved into a mini pantry, with small plates, cutlery and napkins fitted into it.

Healthy meal plan

AN IDEAL LUNCH FOR A 12-HOUR WORK-DAY WOULD INCLUDE:

- A portion of rice and two rotis
- A serving of vegetables or curry
- A bowl of fresh salad to have before lunch
- A handful of nuts or seeds for that 4 pm hunger
- Cut fruits and berries for a quick energy boost on your way back
- Energy bar/protein bar/ occasional sweet
- Juice or buttermilk

Plastic to planet-friendly

One of the most visible changes is the material used for the lunch boxes. Plastic, once the go-to choice for convenience, is steadily being replaced by eco-friendly alternatives. Stainless steel carriers, glass containers and even bamboo-based lunch boxes are gaining popularity.

Steel is durable and keeps food safe without leaching chemicals. Glass, on the other hand, is ideal for those who prefer reheating food without worrying about toxins. Both these options allow use with a plug-in insulated lunch bag that can be plugged to a USB charger to reheat.

Rise of the bento box

Inspired by Japanese design, the bento box style has become a favourite among working professionals. With neatly divided compartments, it allows for a balanced meal without mixing flavours or textures. Its tight covers ensure even liquids like dals, gravies or pickle oil, never spills out.

Small habit, big impact

The modern office lunch box is more than a container - it represents a shift towards healthier eating, mindful living and environmental responsibility. It brings together tradition and innovation, combining the comfort of home-cooked food with the efficiency of modern design. In a fast-paced work culture, opening your lunch box can be a moment of pause, a reminder of nourishment, care and balance. And perhaps, that's the real luxury upgrade.

Power of preparation

Every Sunday, Keerti Tambe, a 30-year-old HR executive at an online fashion company, spends an hour in preparation of her weekly office lunch box. "I leave home at 7 in the morning, so some prep goes a long way in eating healthy meals for the week", she says. The prep includes soaking legumes and seeds for sprouting, cleaning and drying leafy vegetables, stocking the fridge with fruits such as orange, strawberry, blueberry and main dish veggies such as cabbage, cauliflower, cucumber, carrot etc. She also buys paneer and yogurt for the week.

Behind every well-packed lunch box lies a bit of planning. Many people are now embracing the idea of meal prep which includes chopping vegetables or preparing basic gravies the previous night, preparing roti dough in advance, and cleaning berries and stocking roasted nuts and seeds for a week.

This not only saves time on busy mornings but also ensures healthier food choices. When meals are planned, the temptation to order in or kill hunger with beverages reduces significantly.

LEISURE

Beetle Bailey

I GOT A LETTER FROM MY SENATOR! "DEAR FRIEND..." I'M HIS FRIEND!
ZERO'S ONE OF THE RARE PEOPLE WHO ENJOY JUNK MAIL
HEY! ANOTHER FRIEND!
GREG+MORT WALKER
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JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

MRAFE

ESUMO

DONWIW

TOEYCO

Today's Guest JUMBLER is
CHUCK DILLON
creator of Seek & Find puzzles
CAN YOU FIND AT LEAST 4 HIDDEN OBJECTS? SOLVE THE JUMBLES FOR HINTS.
DO YOU SEE THE BUNNY?
SERIOUSLY? I'M NOT BLIND!
WHEN THE CARTOONIST ASKED HIS DAUGHTER TO SPOT THE BUNNY IN HIS DRAWING SHE—
11-11

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

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Answers

When the cartoonist asked his daughter to spot the bunny in his drawing, she — FOUND IT EASY

FRAME MOUSE WINDOW COYOTE

HITORI-143

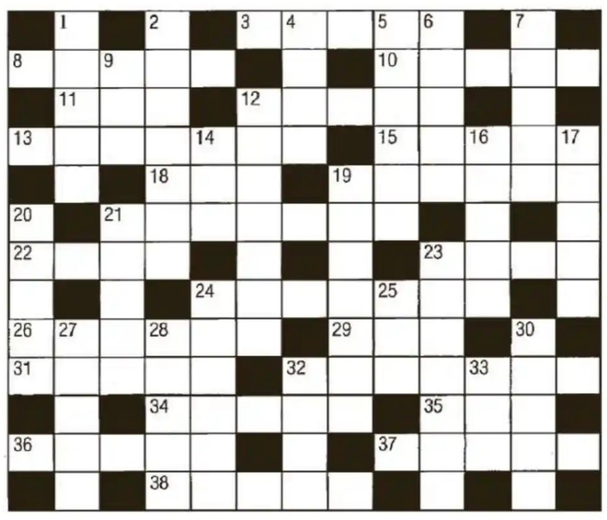
1	6	7	1	8	2	7	7
5	7	3	4	2	6	1	8
2	8	5	5	6	8	8	2
8	4	2	8	7	3	5	5
4	5	2	6	2	1	2	3
2	2	7	7	3	8	5	1
3	1	2	5	2	7	6	6
7	8	8	3	1	2	6	6

SOLUTION for HITORI-143

■	6	2	1	3	8	■	7
6	■	7	■	5	■	1	3
1	5	8	3	■	7	2	■
3	2	1	■	6	■	5	4
5	■	3	7	8	2	4	■
■	8	■	6	■	5	■	2
8	■	6	2	4	3	7	5
■	7	■	8	1	■	6	■

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 144



EASY

ACROSS
3 Labours (5)
8 Ship (5)
10 Book of maps (5)
11 Summit (3)
12 Processed meat (5)
13 Habitual (7)
15 Skewered meat (5)
18 Transgression (3)
19 Tranquil (6)
21 Freedom (7)
22 Overwhelming defeat (4)
23 Dam (4)
24 Metropolis (7)
26 Original (6)
29 Child (3)
31 Chair carried on poles (5)
32 Imminent (7)
34 Italian river (5)
35 Insulate (3)
36 Refuge (5)
37 Revive (5)
38 Appears (5)

DOWN
1 Supple (5)
2 Down payment (7)
4 Of the ear (4)
5 Servile follower (6)
6 Guide (5)
7 Heathen (5)
9 And not (3)
12 Inorganic matter (7)
14 Pen part (3)
16 Cant (5)
17 Facial hair (5)
19 Centre forward (7)
20 Stumbles (5)
21 Sensational (5)
23 Toddles (7)
24 Doglike (6)
25 Metallic element (3)
27 Pass on (5)
28 Friends (5)
30 Heavenly messenger (5)
32 Hairstyle (4)
33 Boy's name (3)

CRYPTIC

ACROSS
3 A short drink, not a good one (5)
8 John, able to sing lento (5)
10 Something for the bookish geography student (5)
11 What the pigeon said to a hundred and two ducks (3)
12 Swill with some particular insecticide (5)
13 Faded away (with one's boots on?) (4,3)
15 A trip organised by a beast (5)
18 A drink to help in recuperation? (3)
19 Whence cowboys can get carried away afresh (6)
21 A "swish" feature of decor? (7)
22 Steal from the Waterloo terminus (4)
23 If out by £50, avoid any deficit (4)
24 In Lancs, you'll be quick to get to its North End (7)
26 Murphy arranges endless parties (6)
29 Feathered, it may skim the water surface (3)
31 From the sun, thus a bit glaring (5)
32 The aged can possibly rely on being led astray (7)
34 It's a good, sound man's residence (5)
35 One foolish enough to rob? (3)
36 Parts may be used as bait (5)
37 Historic British colony in a stormy part of the Atlantic (5)
38 Refute that one can possibly be in a rut (5)

DOWN
1 Hero of the Spanish police department (2,3)
2 Timber sawn artistically? (7)
4 Being "way out" is no longer the thing (4)
5 Lose no time to get out of Athens (6)
6 Driving power for various teams (5)
7 The crazy pair figure to be quick (5)
9 A digit to note (3)
12 Being painful, it's not exactly rapture! (7)
14 The courageous part of us (3)
16 With a certain amount of disputing, made an application (3,2)
17 Right mate, let's get together! (5)
19 It's eaten, sir, possibly with fish (7)
20 Fails to start flying on operations (5)
21 Kind of varnish giving the piano that black outward appearance (5)
23 Might the gang be after him? (7)
24 His pate seems to have a deficiency of hair, the villain! (6)
25 Just a little bit of updating? (3)
27 Politicians given the wrong part in plays (5)
28 In the West Country, a Scots boy with a warm heart (5)
30 Plants disturbed in a gale (5)
32 He's in the bible and the thesaurus (4)
33 A wheel makes one in turning backwards (3)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 144

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 3, Meths 8, Elton 10, Atlas 11, C-OO 12, Rinse 13, Died out 15, Tapir 18, Cup 19, Remuda 21, Curtain 22, Loot 23, Fi-LL 24, Presto-N 26, Pratie 29, Oar 31, So-lar 32, Eld-erly 34, Manse 35, Mug 36, Sprat 37, Natal 38, R-eb-ut.
DOWN: 1, El Cid 2, Wood-cut 4, Ex-it 5, Hasten 6, Steam 7, Rapi-D 9, To-E 12, Rupture 14, Our 16, Put in 17, R-ally 19, Ris-sole 20, Flops. 21, Co-p-al 23, Foreman 24, P-ir-ate 25, Tad (rev) 27, Ro-MPs 28, Tam-ar 30, Algae 32, Esau 33, Rut (rev).

EASY
ACROSS: 3, Toils 8, Liner 10, Atlas 11, Top 12, Mince 13, Chronic 15, Kebab 18, Sin 19, Serene 21, Liberty 22, Rout 23, Weir 24, Capital 26, Primal 29, Kid 31, Sedan 32, Pending 34, Tiber 35, Lag 36, Haven 37, Renew 38, Seems.
DOWN: 1, Little 2, Deposit 4, Otic 5, Lackey 6, Steer 7, Pagan 9, Nor 12, Mineral 14, Nib 16, Bevel 17, Beard 19, Striker 20, Trips 21, Lurid 23, Waddles 24, Canine 25, Tin 27, Relay 28, Mates 30, Angel 32, Perm 33, Ian.

DH DECCAN HERALD
Wknd. FASHION

Get your guest list right – like-minded people – for a relaxed evening
RIGHT VIBE

WEEKEND LIFESTYLE FEATURE

DECOR WITH FLOWERS

The best decor items outdoors are flowers in attractive vases. Place them on side tables. A large arrangement in the centre will be a conversation piece. Water the flowers before the party to ensure they stay fresh. A scent diffuser goes well with a floral theme. A small tabletop fountain will add to the effect.

GO SOFT WITH LIGHTING

Diffused lighting enhances the ambience at a garden dinner. Let reflected light create the illumination you need as far as possible. Only the food and beverage counters can have bright and focussed lighting. Guests will be more comfortable when the lighting is dim in this season.

Drapes for a sizzling summer

This season demands intelligence in dressing. Going ethnic is no longer nostalgic - it is strategic, writes **Prasad Bidapa**

Fashion **Notes**

As the looming threat of El Nino promises a punishing summer, fashion finds itself responding not just with style, but with survival. This is not the season for synthetics or structure - it is a moment to return to the intelligence of Indian, and regional, textiles and silhouettes, where comfort, breathability and cultural memory converge. In this context, going ethnic is no longer nostalgic - it is strategic.

Leading this movement are designers such as Abraham & Thakore, who have reimagined the humble dhoti with a sharp, contemporary lens. Once relegated to domestic ease, the dhoti now emerges as a powerful unisex garment - fluid, minimal and perfectly aligned with the demands of extreme heat.

Similarly, Vivek Karunakaran revisits the core geometry of south Indian drapes, celebrating their simplicity while infusing them with modern sensibility. His interpretation underscores an important shift - the rediscovery of indigenous forms not as costume, but as contemporary design solutions.

This revival is not confined to India alone. In Sri Lanka, designers are reclaiming traditional forms with renewed relevance. Designers such as Asanka De Mel have reinterpreted the sarong - the island's counterpart to the dhoti - bringing it into a global, design-forward conversation. By integrating heritage weaves, artisanal dyeing and modern tailoring, their collections celebrate the sarong not merely as a cultural symbol, but as a sophisticated, climate-responsive garment suited to contemporary lifestyles.

Brand: Sangria. PIC: JITEN AGARWAL

Designer: Vivek Karunakaran

Beyond the runway, the message is clear - embrace silhouettes that allow the body to breathe. The salwar, particularly in feather-light lawn or fine cotton, offers unmatched ease, moving gracefully between home, work and social settings. Equally compelling is the resurgence of the handwoven saree in summer wardrobes. When styled with fitted tees or cropped blouses, these airy drapes shed their formality, becoming effortless daywear that balances fashion with comfort.

For more elevated occasions, the dhoti stands unrivalled. Its sculptural drape lends itself beautifully to eveningwear, especially when executed in soft silks or fine cottons. It is ceremonial, yet breathable - a rare combination in festive dressing.

Accessories, too, play a functional role. The gamcha, dupatta or a handwoven scarf is no longer just an embellishment but a tool - absorbing heat, adding layers of texture and reinforcing the narrative of craft. These pieces, often overlooked, are perhaps the most versatile elements of a summer wardrobe.

In essence, this is a season that demands intelligence in dressing. Across South Asia, designers are proving that tradition is not static - it evolves, adapts and responds. To go ethnic this summer is not merely a stylistic choice - it is a return to wisdom.

Designer: Abraham & Thakore

Strong social barriers can prevent liver failure

Preventive care detects liver disease early and prevents fatalities. **Dr Ravindra Nidoni**, Consultant - Liver Transplant Surgeon, Gleneagles **BGS Hospital** (a Fortis Healthcare Network hospital), outlines priorities before policymakers today

Gleneagles BGS Hospital KENGERI, BENGALURU | Fortis NETWORK HOSPITAL

World Liver Day
April 19

Every year, World Liver Day reminds you of your liver health. But, if this message is to have any significant impact, it must go beyond 'awareness' and become a call for action. A large proportion of liver disease in society is not only treatable, but preventable.

As a liver transplant surgeon, I often see patients when the disease has already reached an advanced stage. By then, the liver is severely damaged, and options are limited to prolonged hospital care, transplant, or, in some cases, death is certain. What makes this more concerning is that many of these cases could have been prevented with timely intervention.

Liver failure rarely occurs suddenly. It is usually the result of years of silent damage caused by alcohol misuse, unhealthy diet, obesity, uncontrolled diabetes, high cholesterol, sedentary lifestyle, viral hepatitis and ignoring of early warning signs. The tragedy is not just the disease itself, but the missed opportunities to treat it early. That's why we must shift our focus from treatment to prevention.

Strong social barriers needed

The most effective way to reduce liver-related deaths is to build strong 'barriers' at multiple levels - individual, family, community and healthcare system. These barriers act as checkpoints that prevent the disease from progressing to cirrhosis, liver failure and the need for transplant.

Regular health check-ups

One of the most simple, yet most powerful, barriers is routine health screening. Many people with fatty liver, early liver disease, diabetes or high cholesterol are unaware of their condition.

Periodic evaluation - including liver function tests, blood sugar, lipid profile and ultrasound - can detect problems early and allow timely correction. Waiting for symptoms is often too late in liver disease.

Act on alcohol-related harm early

Alcohol-related liver disease remains a major and preventable cause of liver failure. The warning signs - dependence, behavioural changes, declining health - often appear years before severe liver damage develops.

Early identification is crucial. Family members, friends and primary care doctors are often the first to notice these changes. Their role should not be passive.

Alcohol dependence must be treated as a health condition, not a social stigma. Effective management requires a structured approach involving family physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists and counsellors. Equally important is strong family and community support.

Timely counselling and sustained habit modification can prevent progression to irreversible liver damage, and many lives can be saved.

Lifestyle-related liver disease on the rise

India is witnessing a growing burden of liver disease linked to modern lifestyle. Poor diet, junk food, obesity, diabetes and lack of physical activity are driving fatty liver disease and metabolic dysfunction-associated liver disease.

This is particularly concerning because it often goes unnoticed. Fatty liver is frequently dismissed as harmless, but it can progress to cirrhosis and even liver cancer if ignored.

Addressing this requires collective action - better awareness about nutrition, encouragement of physical activity and recognition that metabolic health is directly linked to liver health.

Preventing viral hepatitis

Hepatitis B and C remain significant causes of liver failure, yet they are preventable and treatable if detected early.

Mass screening, universal Hepatitis B vaccination and early treatment can significantly reduce the burden of advanced liver disease. Strengthening these public health measures is essential.

Prevention is the real success

Liver transplant is a life-saving procedure, but it should not become the endpoint for preventable diseases. No patient should reach liver transplant due to a condition that could have been identified and managed earlier.

The true measure of success is not how many transplants we perform, but how many we can avoid.

Call for action

This World Liver Day, we must move from awareness to implementation. Preventing liver disease requires a shared responsibility - at home, in clinics and across communities.

If we build strong barriers through regular health check-ups, early intervention for alcohol misuse, lifestyle modification and effective public health strategies, we can significantly reduce the burden of liver failure.

The liver is resilient - but only up to a point. Acting early can save lives, reduce suffering and prevent the need for complex treatments.

This World Liver Day, I urge the government and policymakers to move liver disease prevention from the margins to the centre of public health planning. India needs a structured liver health strategy that includes regular screening, hepatitis testing and vaccination, stronger alcohol de-addiction services, lifestyle intervention and early identification of high-risk individuals through primary care systems. Liver failure should not be the first point at which society responds. If we build stronger preventive barriers today, we can save thousands of lives tomorrow.

Dr Ravindra Nidoni

Clutch some style

Fashion **Notes**

SHILPI MADAN

From the fanny pack to the hobo carry-ons to the slings to the tiny clutch. Fashion always comes a full circle and pursing in this season is the clutch. With much. From OTT vibes to minimalist contours the tiny package is cruising in endearing formats.

Here's your guide to making the clutch purse yours this summer, to look snatched and cool with intention. Go for it.

Beach clutch

Perfect for that destination wedding on the shingle or the pool party setting. Bring in the fringe, tassels, mirrors, beads and blues and corals for a total splash out in a clutch that revs up your appearance by several notches.

Oversized it is

The golden rule is - if you're an apple, never carry huge bags on your shoulders as it adds to the bulk. If you're a pear, avoid the large clutch as it doesn't flatter your frame. Faux animal skin finish is trending - pick up one in an alligator texture to go with neutrals.

Super small

The tinier the better. It doesn't hold much beyond a credit card and perhaps house and car keys, but looks super stylish. Popularised by celebrities on the red carpet, this one is a must in snowy white or eye-popper colours.

Subtle silhouettes

A slim, elegant case makes for a fabulous clutch that is non-obtrusive, yet classy.

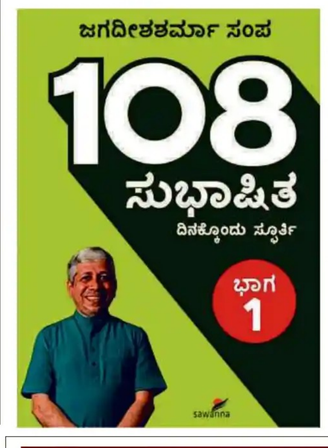
Make way for pastels, embellishments in pearls and embroidered motifs for a modern and traditional spin that flatters both Indian and Western outfits.

Contrast it

Monochromes are boring. Instead of playing with different tones of the same colour in your outfit, make the clutch the showstopper. Try a scarlet red or a tantalising teal in sleek contours against a white outfit to make it stand out. Allow the attire to form the background score.

Saptak to launch Sampa's book

The book '108 Subhashita (Part I)' authored by Jagadisha Sharma Sampa and published by Jameel Sawanna is being launched tomorrow at Indian Institute of World Culture, Basavanagudi, at 5 pm.



Jagadisha Sharma Sampa has authored over 30 books.

The book launch event, organised by Saptak Trust, features a light classical music concert 'Sahitya Sangeeta Samaroha' with Arundhati Vasistha (vocal), Amit Raj S (tabla) and Surya Upadhyaya (harmonium).

The trust has organised a large number of concerts across the State and plays an active role in enabling talented students of music from economically-weaker sections pursue the art by sponsoring their instruments.

G S Hegde and Gita Hegde, trustees of Saptak Trust, will be present at the event along with chief guests author Dr Gajanana Sharma, and journalists Ranganath Bharadwaj and Radhika Rani.

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SUMMER SIP

WEEKEND LIFESTYLE FEATURE

NATURAL HYDRATION

A daily dose of tender coconut water is an ideal cooler this season. It is low in calories and rich in nutrients. It is a natural electrolyte drink, offering good hydration and also regulates blood pressure with its high potassium content. It aids digestion and boosts immunity too. Substitute a coffee/tea break with this drink.

NUTRIENT-RICH COOLER

A must-have after lunch, buttermilk is a great cooler on these hot days. It is rich in nutrients and packed with probiotics. It offers many health benefits and aids in weight management. It cools the body naturally and also reduces acidity. It is low in fat and can be consumed chilled. Avoid infusing it with sugar.

Cool Summer

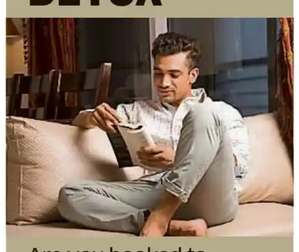
Early or late days

This is the time to reschedule your outdoor activity and exercise sessions to either the early hours or late evenings. Working-out during the hours when the heat is at its lowest is a good way to prevent dehydration and get in the usual intense sessions. Schedule your outdoor visits to earlier or later hours to avoid skin damage from the harsh summer sun.

Hydrate well

Water is your bestie through the summer. Carry a water bottle with you and track the consumption. You need to drink at least three litres of water daily. Infuse the water with herbs for added value of a stronger immune system to prevent summer infections.

DIGITAL DETOX



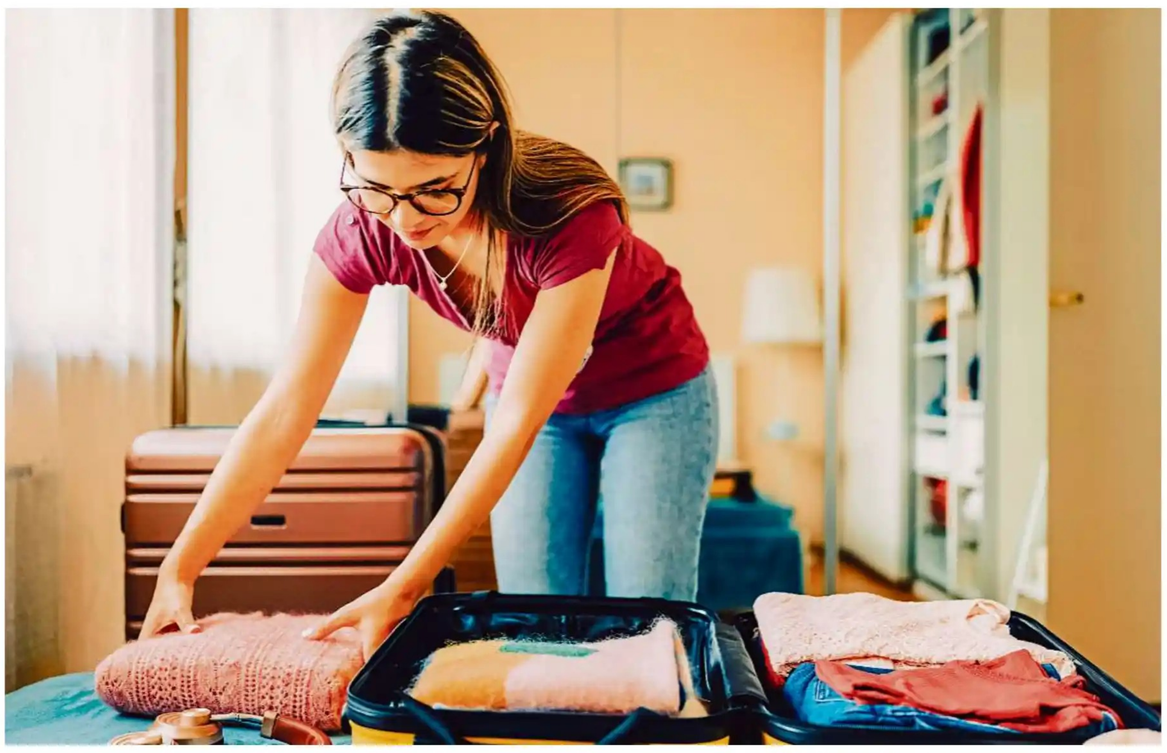
Are you hooked to screens? This is a great time for some digital detox. All you need to do is set aside some time when you keep your phone and screens away. It will give your mind a break and help you relax. After a hot and hectic day, there's nothing like some quiet space and time to bounce back.

SUNSET ACTIVITIES

This is the best part of the day. The evenings stretch and are pleasant. Activities such as cycling or brisk walks in the evenings are both relaxing and less demanding. The long evenings are great times to catch up with old friends over a chilled mocktail.

Salad no bar

Include a salad in meals. Ensure a healthy dose of veggies with high water content such as cucumber and tomato in your salad. These veggies add to your hydration and keep you feeling light. Avoid very spicy and heavy food, especially in the afternoons. Cucumber sticks are a great option as a snack between meals.



Pack smart, travel light

Travel Pro

Shilpi Madan has some tips to help you put together a more efficient travel bag

Struggling to pack all you need within the airline's baggage limit? Don't stress. Here's your easy-peasy guide to travelling light. Hop on and off flights with casual ease with these simple tips.

Multi-tasking separates

Follow the sudoku method of mixing and matching separates. You can create a capsule wardrobe using 3x3x3 pieces. This includes layering in terms of a sleeveless top, a full-sleeved top, a skirt, pair of trousers, a shirt and accessories.

Fold crisply in angular notations for easy packing. Keep in mind the location and the climate. Include resort wear, city style, safari essentials as required.

Go for wrinkle-free

Bring in the easy-dry, crease-free fabrics in black trousers and a pair of cotton denims. Solid colours help you accessorise easily and give yourself a new look. Pack neutrals in clothes and colour pops in jewellery, bags and shoes.

Keep in mind the purpose of your visit - to make sure you pack correctly for formal outings and casual hang-outs.

Travel packs

Bring in the mini lotions, sachets of shampoo, facewash and conditioner, sunscreen, night creams and moisturisers. Keep in mind the number of days that span your trip to ensure you have adequate stock.

Travel trinkets

Avoid carrying real jewellery. Travel trinkets work the best in ease of changing swiftly in keeping with your outfits. Keep them in a separate pouch in pairs in zip-lock bags or tacked onto paper in pairs. Use tissue to prevent abrasion amongst the metal picks. Pack silver, champagne and gold coloured pieces to ensure you have something to wear with each attire.

Holistic care at SPARSH Hospital

This facility offers integrated and patient-centric healthcare across specialities for better outcomes

SPARSH Hospital, Sarjapur Road, is a well-equipped healthcare facility offering emergency trauma care, advanced neuro services, orthopaedics and endocrine management, each functioning with dedicated expertise and infrastructure.

The Emergency Medicine and Trauma Unit operates 24×7 with round-the-clock availability of emergency medicine specialists, ensuring expert-led care at all times. The unit is equipped with high-end, advanced medical equipment which aids in managing heart attacks, strokes, accidents, fractures and other life-threatening emergencies.

The patients receive immediate, efficient and definitive care from time of arrival.

In the field of neuro care, SPARSH Hospital is a stroke-ready centre with specialised neurologists and neurosurgeons. The hospital follows established stroke management pathways to ensure early diagnosis and timely treatment, improving patient recovery and outcomes.

The orthopaedics department focuses on comprehensive bone and joint care, including trauma management, joint preservation and advanced surgical solutions such as robotic-assisted procedures. The team is experienced in treating everything from simple fractures to complex orthopaedic conditions.

The endocrine services address hormonal and metabolic disorders, including diabetes and thyroid conditions. With a focus on long-term management and patient education, the department supports patients in maintaining stable health outcomes.

By bringing together emergency care, neuro expertise, orthopaedics and endocrine services SPARSH Hospital, Sarjapur Road, ensures integrated and patient-centric healthcare across specialties.

For details:
SPARSH Hospital Sarjapur Road
Sarjapur Main Road,
Carmelaram, Hadosiddapura,
Chikkakannalli, Bengaluru 35
Phone: 080 6122 2000
Website:
www.sparshhospital.com

Deepa Natarajan Lobo gets three beverage experts to share some tricks to give the humble coconut water a spin

Summer Sips

Long regarded as Nature's own summer drink, the humble tender coconut water is loaded with essential electrolytes and remains one of the best ways to beat the heat while supporting overall wellness.

Light, cooling, and easy on the system, it also serves as the perfect base for refreshing summer sips, easily transforming into a range of inventive drinks. Beverage experts share simple, yet distinctive, recipes to create flavour-forward drinks - from cafe-style blends to tropical fusions and creamy indulgences.

Cold Brew Fizz

BY ASHISH PAWAR,
RESTAURANT MANAGER

What you need

- Cold brew coffee – **60 ml**
- Coconut water – **100 ml**
- A dash of vanilla essence
- A splash of sparkling water

Preparation

Fill a glass completely with ice. Pour coconut water as the base layer. Add three drops of vanilla essence. Pour cold brew coffee slowly over the ice (use a spoon for layering). Top with a splash of sparkling water. Give a very light stir and serve chilled.

PIC COURTESY:
MANNHEIM
CRAFT BREWERY

Tropical Shikanji

BY JOPEN LEPCHA
BARTENDER

What you need

- Tender coconut water – 150 ml
- Mint leaves – 6-8
- Lemon juice – 15 ml
- Simple syrup – 10–15 ml
- A pinch each of roasted jeera powder and black salt
- Ice cubes as required

PIC COURTESY:
THE OTERRA

Preparation

Muddle mint leaves gently to release aroma. Add coconut water, lemon juice and simple syrup. Sprinkle roasted jeera powder and black salt. Add ice and shake lightly or stir well. Strain into a glass filled with fresh ice and serve.

BY JOPEN LEPCHA
BARTENDER

Preparation

Blend coconut water and malai lightly for a textured base. Add coconut cream and ice. Blend briefly until smooth and creamy. Pour into a chilled glass and serve immediately.

PIC COURTESY:
THE OTERRA

Coconut Water Matcha Latte

BY JONES ELISH
BEVERAGE HEAD

What you need

- One teaspoon of matcha powder
- 200 ml of tender coconut water (chilled)
- 50 ml of milk or coconut milk
- Ice cubes as required
- One tablespoon of fresh coconut shavings
- Two teaspoons of honey or liquid jaggery (optional)

Preparation

Whisk matcha with 30–40 ml of warm water until smooth. Fill a glass with ice and pour in chilled coconut water. Add matcha and stir gently. Top with milk for a layered finish. Add sweetener if needed. Finish with fresh coconut shavings and serve. Chef's note: The coconut shavings add a subtle bite without overpowering the drink and keep the flavours clean and balanced.

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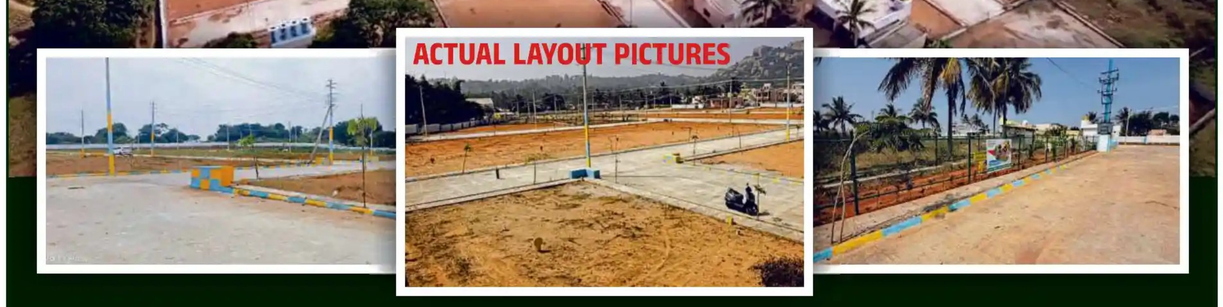

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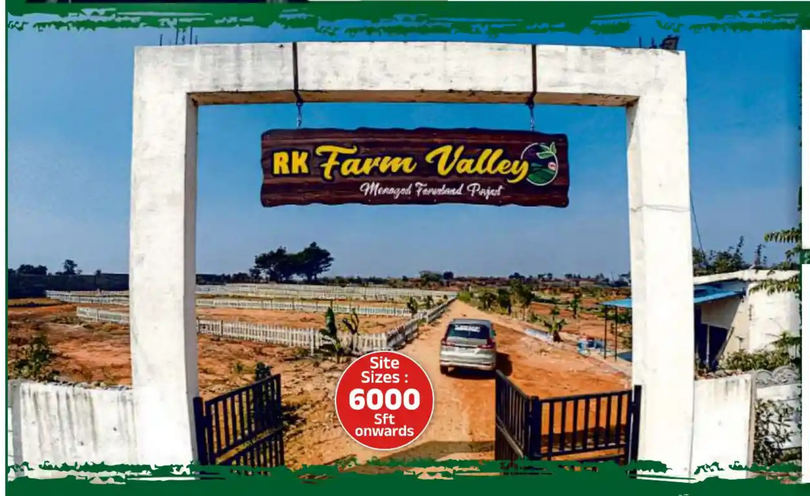

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PIYUSH B 95.52%

HARSHITH Y 95.52%

VIJAY R 95.02%

ANNIAPPAN E 94.56%

LITHESH G 94.56%

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SAHANA N 93.28%

YASHAS L 93.12%

CHINMAYEE M 92.08%

PARINITHA C 93.32%

DEEKSHITHA G H 93.32%

DEEKSHITHA L 92.16%

GAGAN S 92.16%

SWAPNA N 91.68%

KUSUMA C 91.36%

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RAMASHREE C 96%

YUKTHIKA N 95.68%

CHANDANA G 94.88%

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KEERTHI K 93.12%

DHYAN M 92.96%

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DEERAJ C 90.72%

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97.60%

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97.28%

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VAIBHAV Y
97.12%

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572
E. SHREYA
91.52%

562
NAMAN
89.92%

560
SHEETAL SHIVANI. D
89.06%

550
NINAAD. S.K
88%

542
PREETHAM. V
86.72%

597
NAVAMI S
95.52%

541
SUHAS V
86.56%

529
YASHWANTH.N
84.64%

513
VIVAAN VIKRAM KAMBLI
82%

511
BHUVAN GOWDA . M
81.76%

508
GANAVI.R
81.28%

502
G.LIKIL
80.03%

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BHARGAVI S
93.92%

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SHREYA K
90.04%

VAISHNAVI M B
89.44%

NITHU N
88.96%

NAVEEN N K
88.64%

GAGAN P
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VARSHINI P
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VIJAY SIMHA H B
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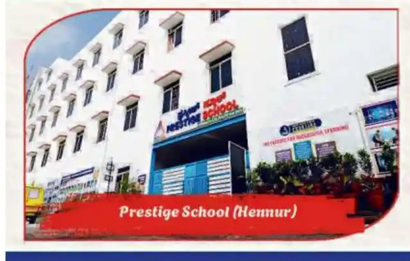

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